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Report of the High-level Committee on Programmes at its thirty-second session*

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Equality and non-discrimination at the heart of sustainable development: a Shared United Nations Framework for Action

Executive summary

Rising inequalities across the world have become a **defining challenge of our time**. Gross inequalities both within and among countries are putting sustainable development at risk, stirring social unrest, undermining social progress, threatening economic and political stability, and undercutting human rights. As such, they **threaten all pillars of the United Nations** system's work, from development to human rights to peace and security.

The scope of the problem is daunting. Inequalities of wealth and income have reached historic proportions and inequalities in opportunities and outcomes relating to education, health, food security, employment, housing, health services and economic resources are having equally devastating effects. These inequalities **disproportionately affect particular groups** on the basis of race, sex, language, religion, age, ethnicity, disability, migrant or economic status, and so on. And gender-based discrimination remains one of the most prevalent forms of discrimination across the globe.

In recognition of this, the **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development** is, in large measure, an **agenda for equality**. It recognizes "rising inequalities within and among countries", "enormous disparities of opportunity, wealth and power", and persistent "gender inequality" as "immense challenges" confronting the world today. So central is the imperative of combating inequalities and discrimination that the new Agenda includes two goals explicitly focused on this issue: Goals 5 (gender equality) and 10 (inequality within and among countries). In addition, all other Sustainable Development Goals call for more equitable development and universal access to the constituent elements of development for all people. The new Agenda

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calls for the disaggregation of data across all goals to enable measurement of its central pledge to leave no one behind.

States have committed to a full range of goals and targets that directly address discrimination and inequalities within and among countries, ranging from remedying gross income inequalities to promoting the social, economic and political inclusion of all, eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices, and adopting policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies to progressively achieve greater equality. They also address global level inequalities by calling for improved regulation and monitoring of global financial markets and institutions and enhanced representation and voice for developing countries in global economic and financial institutions.

Significantly, member States have put "leaving no one behind" at the heart of the new Agenda, so that all people in all countries benefit from sustainable development and the full realization of human rights, without discrimination on the basis of sex, age, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth, disability or other status. The special emphasis on those left furthest behind and most excluded focuses in particular on women and girls, children, youth, persons with disabilities, persons living with HIV/AIDS, older persons, indigenous peoples, refugees, internally displaced persons and migrants, among others. This means that progress can no longer be measured in averages or aggregate, and that development must be seen to benefit all people, including by reducing inequalities and discrimination.

The **World Humanitarian Summit** reinforced the 2030 Agenda with a strong focus on leaving no one behind, inclusion and attention to the most vulnerable. The principles of humanity and impartiality require a strong focus on aid distribution without any discrimination, and on attention to vulnerabilities in humanitarian programmes and planning.

For these reasons, the United Nations System **Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) called for the High-level Committee on Programmes to develop a "Shared Framework for Action on Combating Inequalities and Discrimination"** with a coherent, strategic and whole-of-system action plan that is operationally oriented and fully grounded in the United Nations norms and standards (including the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and relevant United Nations treaties and declarations) and in the Sustainable Development Goals themselves.

As such, this paper sets out a **conceptual framework** that includes ***equality*** (the imperative of moving towards substantive equality of opportunity and outcomes for all groups), ***non-discrimination*** (the prohibition of discrimination against individuals and groups on the grounds identified in international human rights treaties) and the broader concept of ***equity*** (understood as fairness in the distribution of costs, benefits and opportunities). It addresses both ***horizontal*** inequalities (between social groups) and ***vertical*** inequalities (in income, etc.) and inequalities of both *opportunities* and *outcomes*. ***Intergenerational*** *equity* is addressed, as are ***inequalities among countries***.

In setting out a **shared framework for implementation**, the paper calls for the alignment of strategic frameworks and plans across the system, building on the many actions and areas of support already under way within individual United Nations system entities, ensuring their coherence with the approach set out in this paper, filling any gaps, and developing a more joint and integrated response. It proposes that the High-level Committee on Programmes should play a role in keeping the implementation of the framework under review and in periodically reporting thereon to the CEB.

The paper also emphasizes that the **United Nations system** must ensure the availability of a **comprehensive set of support options for policies and programmes** that will help Member States to reduce inequalities and dismantle discrimination, and, thereby, to achieve the equality imperatives of the Sustainable Development Goals. It recognizes that rising inequalities are not inevitable, but the result of policies, laws, institutions and cultural practices — or "rules of the game" — that shape the economy and political and social systems, and that the United Nations has a critical role to play in promoting the institutionalization of legal and policy measures, regulations and practices that promote greater equality and non-discrimination for all people.

The paper then sets out the **elements of a comprehensive and coherent package of policy and programme support** areas to combat discrimination and inequalities within and among countries, which would include:

At the country level

- Programmes to promote institutions, laws, policies, and actions to **combat discrimination** on the basis of race, sex, language, ethnicity, religion, age, disability, caste, indigenous status, health status, migrant status, minority status, or other grounds, and to **advance equal access to justice**.
- Support for **reducing spatial or geographical inequalities between rural-urban areas and/or between industrialized-non-industrialized or remote regions**, including by promoting responsible and socially inclusive investments.
- Initiatives **promoting gender equality** and eliminating all forms of discrimination and violence against women, investments to close the gender gap and strengthen support for institutions for gender equality and the empowerment of women.
- Support for **strengthening economic governance**, regulation, accountability and the rule of law in the economic sphere.
- Support for **full employment** and inclusive economic policies, promoting decent work.
- Support to eliminate employment discrimination and to **reinforce labour rights**, including decent work, minimum wages (including for migrant workers), freedom of association and collective bargaining, and the eradication of forced and child labour.

- Initiatives to combat all forms of age discrimination against older persons in employment, as well as to promote **youth employment and socioeconomic inclusion of all ages**, and to address the vulnerability of young people to higher unemployment and lower quality of jobs as well as to longer and more insecure school-to-work transitions.

- Assistance for **social protection systems** that reduce inequalities by providing a safety net that maintains the right to an adequate standard of living for all. **Support for universal health coverage**, for universal access to health care and to be free of catastrophic out-of-pocket expenditure as a result of health costs that produce poverty and inequality.

- Programmes for universal access to **education, water, sanitation, care** and other economic and social rights to promote greater equality in opportunities and outcomes.

- Assistance in achieving universal **access to information and communications technologies (ICTs)** and the narrowing of the digital divide.

- Programmes to support **redistributive fiscal policy and progressive taxation** and to reverse extreme concentrations of wealth and progressively achieve greater equality.

- Assistance **for tackling illicit outflows and tax evasion**.

- Support to strengthen the protection of freedom of expression, association, and assembly, to insulate **democratic institutions and processes** from elite political capture, to ensure equal political participation for all women and men, and to promote public access to information.

- Programmes to reinforce **private sector accountability,** including Implementing the *Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights* and to ensure effective regulation of business by governments, as well as **social, environmental and human rights impact assessments** and due diligence safeguards to prevent negative impacts.

- **Support for measures to protect vulnerable, marginalized and excluded communities** in prevention and mitigation of the impacts of and building resilience to climate, natural disasters, desertification, land degradation, and humanitarian crises.

At the regional level

- Provide a **bridge between the global and national levels**, including by adapting and incorporating elements of this equality framework into regional policy frameworks and transmitting them to the country level, and feeding back national experiences to the global agenda.

- **Conduct studies/share best practices** to deepen the understanding of the multiple dimensions of inequality identified in this framework.

- **Develop indicators and operational guidelines** to follow-up on the implementation of regionally or internationally agreed agendas at the national and local levels.

- As part of the follow-up and review of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, review in the regional forums on sustainable development the status of **implementation of the agenda of equality** and build on the experience and sectoral guidance of the regional commissions' intergovernmental subsidiary bodies.

- Promote **pro-equality public policies** as core elements of the regional development agenda.

At the global level

- Promotion of a more **equitable global trading system** that addresses inequities built into existing trade rules particularly for the least developed countries (LDCs) and implements the principle of special and differential treatment.

- Development of a more **equitable international financial system**, including better regulation of global financial markets and of speculation, the equitable participation of all States in the institutions of global governance, as identified in the 2030 Agenda, and official development assistance (ODA) to countries with people in greatest need.

- Reinforcing **national policy space** to promote inequality-reducing measures and to correct policy incoherence between intellectual property and trade rules, public health, and human rights, including by implementing the trade-related intellectual property rights (TRIPS) Agreement on Public Health.

- Cooperating for **technology transfer** to promote greater equality.

- Strengthening global governance of **migration** in a way that recognizes the rights of all migrants and refugees under universal human rights and international refugee law.

An additional essential element for implementation of the framework is a **common, system-wide approach to analysis and monitoring of inequalities and discrimination** and their root causes. For this, the framework proposes to build on current good practices within the United Nations system, but calls as well for more systematic use of those existing tools and expertise, learning from practice and investing in what works, and adopting new and innovative tools and methodologies to capture the key elements identified in the conceptual approach outlined in the framework.

The key elements include: a common approach to "leaving no one behind;" supporting greater data disaggregation across a wider range of grounds for all Sustainable Development Goal indicators; systematic analysis of available (disaggregated) data (qualitative and quantitative) on marginalized groups; new tools for analysis of horizontal and vertical inequalities, as well as of discrimination, stigma, exclusion, and equity issues; identification of subjects of multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination; joined-up analysis of drivers, root causes, and underlying determinants of inequalities and discrimination; and *ex ante* and *ex post* impact assessments to gauge the impact of United Nations programmes on the situation of particular groups and on inequalities and discrimination.

Under the framework, implementation is also to focus on **strengthening Sustainable Development Goal accountability measures** at the national and global levels. The paper argues that the United Nations system should use its convening power to encourage accountability through transparent tracking of equality aspects of Sustainable Development Goal progress, and to alert governments and other actors of retrogression, with the aim of getting back on track or changing course, where necessary. Finally, the United Nations system has a critical role to play in ensuring that Sustainable Development Goal review mechanisms engage a wide range of stakeholders, in particular civil society and marginalized people who may still be left behind, so that their authoritative voices inform the process.

The paper concludes with **proposed next steps** for adoption by the CEB. These include: (1) **the integration of the Shared Framework in the strategic frameworks, policy guidance, and plans of CEB member organizations;** (2) **periodic review of the Framework by the High-level Committee on Programmes, reporting thereon to the CEB;** (3) **consideration by the United Nations Development Group of means for supporting operationalization of the Shared Framework at the country level.**

I. Introduction

Rising inequalities across the world have become the defining challenge of our time.

Deepening, divisive and destabilizing inequalities both within and among countries are putting sustainable development at risk, stirring social unrest, undermining social progress and threatening economic and political stability, affecting all pillars of the United Nations system's work, from development to human rights and peace and security.

In September 2015, United Nations Member States unanimously adopted the new global development agenda, entitled "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" (General Assembly resolution 70/1), which puts the imperative to "leave no one behind" and to "reach the furthest behind first" at its heart. It aims not only to end poverty and hunger, but to "combat inequalities within and among countries"; to "build peaceful, just and inclusive societies"; to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls" and protect all human rights, including the right to development, so that all human beings can fulfil their potential in dignity and equality in a healthy environment.

The 2030 Agenda recognizes the risks of "rising inequalities within and among countries", "enormous disparities of opportunity, wealth and power", and persistent "gender inequality" as "immense challenges" confronting the world today. Member States have therefore committed to goals and targets that will address discrimination and inequalities within and among countries. Targets range from addressing income inequalities to promoting the social, economic and political inclusion of all, eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices; and adopting policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies, and progressively achieving greater equality. They also include addressing global inequalities, including by improving the regulation and monitoring of global financial markets and institutions and ensuring enhanced representation and voice for developing countries in decision-making in global international economic and financial institutions.

Member States have put "leaving no one behind" at the heart of the new Agenda, so that all people in all countries benefit from development and the full realization of human rights, without discrimination on the basis of sex, age, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinions, national and social origin, property, birth, disability or other status. There is also a special focus on those left furthest behind and most excluded, including women and girls, children, youth, persons with disabilities, persons living with HIV/AIDs, older persons, indigenous peoples, refugees, internally displaced persons and migrants, amongst others.

To be "fit for purpose", the United Nations system must be prepared to support Member States in meeting this imperative. The Chief Executives Board (CEB) and the High-level Committee on Programmes have thus identified rising inequalities as a central priority for the United Nations system support for implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Furthermore, the CEB common principles to guide the United Nations system's support for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development places addressing inequality, leaving

no one behind and reaching the furthest behind first at the heart of the United Nations system's support for the Agenda.[1]

In this context, the United Nations system's CEB has called for the High-level Committee on Programmes to develop a "Shared Framework for Action on Combating Inequalities and Discrimination" to underpin United Nations system support for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

II. Purpose and scope of the "Shared Framework"

In December 2015, the CEB adopted a Statement of Commitment on "**Putting the imperative to combat inequalities and discrimination at the forefront of UN efforts to support implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**". While recognizing the respective mandates of its member organizations, the CEB emphasized that it:

a. Shares and strongly supports Member States' ambitions for a more equal world that is respectful of human rights and dignity;

b. Affirms the United Nations system's commitment at the highest level to pursue this vision, putting the imperative to eliminate discrimination and reduce inequalities — within and among countries — at the forefront of United Nations efforts to support Member States in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda;

c. Reaffirms the United Nation system's commitment under the Charter of the United Nations to promote and encourage respect for human rights, including the principle of equality and non-discrimination for all people;

d. Calls on the CEB's three pillars (the High-level Committee on Programmes, the High-Level Committee on Management and the United Nations Development Group) and CEB member organizations to put this imperative to combat inequalities and discrimination at the centre of their strategic frameworks, policy guidance and global plans of action, as relevant, in support of implementation of the 2030 Agenda over the next 15 years, including to ensure that United Nations efforts prioritize the needs of those furthest behind first and ensure that no one is left behind;

e. Requests the High-level Committee on Programmes to develop a coherent, strategic, whole-of-system approach to implementing this imperative, in the form of a "Shared Framework for Action on Combating Inequalities and Discrimination", that is operationally oriented and fully grounded in the United Nations normative standards, and universally applicable for all Sustainable Development Goals in all countries;

f. Asks the High-level Committee on Programmes to reflect on how this approach could be operationalized in all countries and regions, including through the United Nations Development Group; and

g. Calls on the High-level Committee on Programmes to present the "Shared Framework for Action on Combating Inequalities and Discrimination" to the CEB at its 2nd regular session of 2016.

The High-level Committee on Programmes, in its role as the principal mechanism for United Nations system-wide policy and programme direction, coherence and coordination, is requested to develop this "United Nations Shared Framework for Action" to put combating inequalities and discrimination at the heart of United Nations efforts supporting the implementation of the 2030 Agenda over the next 15 years.

This builds on the High-level Committee on Programmes positioning paper, **"Equality and Non-Discrimination at the Heart of Sustainable Development: Towards a UN System-Wide Shared Framework for Addressing Inequalities and Discrimination in Implementation of the 2030 Agenda"** of 4 November 2015, which was adopted by the High-level Committee and endorsed by the CEB in November 2015 "as an integral part of a human-rights based approach" to implementation of the 2030 Agenda (Summary of conclusions, CEB/2015/2).

The purpose of this "Shared Framework for Action" is to establish a common understanding of this challenge and a common programme for urgent action.

III. The challenge: rising inequalities as a threat to sustainable development[2]

The weight of economic evidence now suggests that high levels of income inequality threaten the stability and sustainability of economic growth,[3] and it is now widely considered that economic inequality and associated increasing indebtedness is a key factor contributing to financial crises, including the 2007 global economic crisis.[4]

High levels of inequality reduce the efficiency of economic growth in contributing to poverty reduction — as the benefits of economic growth flow to affluent groups, rather than the poor[5] — and reduce the likelihood of public spending on improving social service coverage and outcomes, including mortality rates, learning levels and nutrition, given elite capture of political systems.[6] High inequalities are transmitted across generations and limit equal opportunities for children, as children's opportunities are largely determined by their parents' incomes and outcomes,[7] demonstrating the interlinkages between equality of opportunities and equality of outcomes.

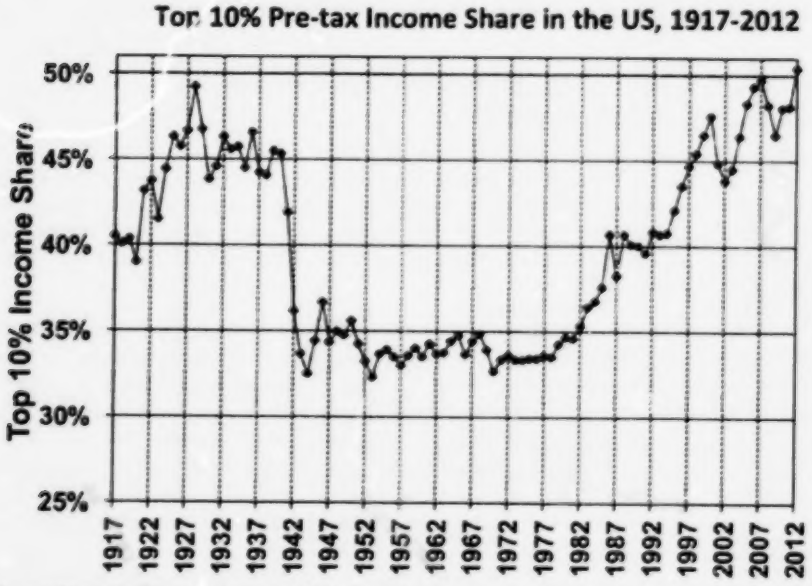
Empirical studies also show that deep and excessive inequalities between ethnic and religious groups — whether in income, access to economic resources, social services, political participation or justice — threaten social cohesion, radicalize groups and heighten the risk of tensions escalating into political crisis and violent conflict.[8] Rising inequalities are therefore a concern for whole societies, not only because this undercuts poverty reduction and economic development, but also because it undermines the enjoyment of human rights, social cohesion, peace and sustainable development.

A. Inequalities of wealth and income

A recent International Monetary Fund (IMF) discussion note has argued that "widening income inequality is the defining challenge of our time" with the gap

between rich and poor at its highest level for decades in the advanced developing economies.[9] Income inequality has increased substantially since 1990 in most of the developed countries, with Asia and Eastern Europe also seeing marked increases in inequality.[10] The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has shown that by 2014, more than 75 per cent of the population of developing countries lived in societies with a more unequal income distribution than they had in the 1990s.[11] Only Latin America has seen declines in income inequality — as a direct result of recent policy decisions to reverse inequalities — though that region remains the most unequal in the world.[12]

The work of the French economist Thomas Piketty has graphically illustrated how inequalities in the developed economies are reaching levels not seen since before the 1929 Great Crash and the Great Depression, as illustrated in the graph below on pre-tax income inequality in the United States:[13]



Source: Piketty and Saez, 2003 updated to 2012. Series based on pre-tax cash market income including realized capital gains and excluding government transfers. 2012 data based on preliminary statistics

Inequalities in wealth are even more extreme than inequalities in income.[14]

Globally, as highlighted in a recent IMF publication, the top 1 per cent of the world's population now owns almost half of the world's wealth.[15] Recent reports from the non-governmental organization Oxfam suggest that the world's 84 richest individuals now own as much as the poorest 3.5 billion people put together. In most countries with available data, the share held by the top one per cent is rising at the expense of the bottom 90 per cent.[16] In the United States, the top one per cent now holds one third of United States total wealth, while low and middle-class households are increasingly indebted. Inequality has deepened after the global economic crisis of 2007-2008, with the wealthiest capturing most of the gains of

government responses to the crisis such as quantitative easing,[17] whilst austerity policies have disproportionately impacted the less well-off,[18] illustrating how policy choices can have a marked distributional impact.

B. Other forms of inequality

However, stark inequalities exist not only related to income and wealth. Other problematic inequalities — that are also intrinsically related to economic inequalities exist — include **inequalities in opportunities and outcomes relating to education, health, food security, employment, housing, health services, as well as in access to economic resources**,[19] which also amount to failures to achieve internationally agreed human rights.

These inequalities affect some populations disproportionately — often as a result of their sex, age, ethnicity, disability, migrant, health or economic status etc. For example, the world's poorest children are four times more likely not to go to school than the world's richest children, and five times more likely not to complete primary school.[20] Migrant and stateless children may be excluded from school due to their uncertain legal status; pregnant girls may be withdrawn from school for care work, and pregnant girls and children including with disabilities are frequently excluded from school and face institutionalized discrimination, stigmatization and neglect. Around 43 per cent of out-of-school children at primary and secondary levels are children living in countries affected by humanitarian crises.

Monitoring income-related inequalities should thus be complemented with other measures of inequalities, including for example the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) deprivation-based measures, based on internationally agreed definitions of child rights-related to deprivation of children's needs for adequate nutrition, safe drinking water, decent sanitation facilities, health, shelter, education and access to information.[21] The Sustainable Development Goals reflect the commitment of Member States to curb inequalities across a broad range of outcomes and opportunities — and the Sustainable Development Goal indicators will enable the systematic measurement and tracking of overlapping inequalities in economic, social and environmental sectors.

C. Gender-based discrimination

Gender-based discrimination remains one of the most prevalent forms of discrimination, creating barriers to the development of the full potential of half the world's population. Deep-seated discriminatory norms, harmful gender stereotypes, prejudices and practices including unequal pay for equal work as well as gender-based violence against women and girls continue to prevent equality and the full realization of women's human rights. Progress in promoting gender equality has been slow, with stagnation and even regression in some countries and a backlash against women and girl's rights in a number of contexts. Discrimination in the law persists in many countries, particularly in family, nationality, health inheritance laws, including laws that restrict women's access to and control over resources. In many countries laws and regulations also restrict women's access to sexual and reproductive health services that only women need, with unmarried women, and

adolescents most often denied access to sexual and reproductive health services, information and education due to economic, social, legal and cultural barriers.[22]

Women remain underrepresented in decision-making in the public and private arenas at all levels and sectors. Women in the workforce face poorer conditions, unfair care burdens and lack of decent work, and are overrepresented in vulnerable and informal employment with fewer prospects for advancement. Women's salaries are lower than men's in almost all countries and, according to the International Labour Organization (ILO), the gender pay gap persists for women, with women earning on average 77 per cent of what men earn for work of equal value, with an even wider absolute gap for higher-earning women. There is evidence that women with children incur a further wage penalty, known as the "motherhood pay gap".

At the current rate of progress, pay equity between women and men will not be achieved until 2086, 71 years from now.[23] Unequal pay has cumulative impacts, resulting in greater inequality and poverty for older women.[24] Women also continue to bear heavy and disproportionate unpaid care workloads, and face unacceptably high levels of preventable maternal mortality, particularly for adolescent girls, indigenous and rural women, women belonging to minority groups and stateless and displaced women.

D. Discrimination against other population groups

Many other forms of discrimination also persist against other population groups (e.g., discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation and gender identity, etc.), with many people affected by **multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination** that produce and reproduce deep inequalities across generations. People from particular ethnicities, caste or minorities or indigenous peoples, and groups in situations of vulnerability, persons with disabilities or mental health problems, migrants, refugees, stateless and displaced persons, children, youth, older persons, slum dwellers, persons people living with HIV/AIDS, sexual minorities (and especially women within these groups), are often excluded, disempowered and discriminated against in law, policy and practice, resulting in inequalities in both opportunities and outcomes.

One study measuring Millennium Development Goals progress found that, in Nepal, under-five mortality rates among Dalit communities (90 per 1,000 live births) were more than double those of the Newar caste (43 per 1,000 live births), while in Vietnam only 7 per cent of ethnic minority households had access to improved sanitation compared to 43 per cent of the majority Kinh and Chinese groups. Similarly, in South Africa, the incomes of black Africans were only 13 per cent of white incomes.[25] The most recent ILO Global Wage Report has highlighted that discrimination and wage penalties suffered by women, migrant workers and workers in the informal economy who are often from disadvantaged groups contribute to income inequality.[26]

Racism and xenophobia are often at the root of discrimination against particular groups, often involving restrictions or restrictive interpretations of laws, policies and practices, which can also affect, e.g., the situation of migrants, asylum-seekers, refugees, internally displaced persons and stateless persons. Islamophobia has become a global phenomenon, challenging the realization of a broad range of

human rights for millions. Indigenous peoples face particular challenges, frequently underrepresented politically, denied control over their own development based on their own values, needs, rights and priorities; lacking in access to social and other services and frequently the victims of forced displacement as a result of the exploitation of natural resources and other development projects.[27] Some groups are also particularly vulnerable and marginalized because Governments refuse to protect them from discrimination and exclusion, such as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual and intersex (LGBTI) persons, men who have sex with men, sex workers, people living with HIV/AIDS, people who inject drugs, prisoners or people in detention.

E. Drivers of inequality

Inequalities are deeply entrenched by structural drivers and barriers across all economic, social, political, cultural urban and environmental domains. These drivers intersect and reinforce each other and can have cumulative, mutually reinforcing effects that lead to systematic disadvantage and the perpetuation of discrimination, inequality and exclusion from generation to generation. Addressing inequalities is therefore also about addressing structural barriers, reversing unequal distributions of power, resources and opportunities and challenging discriminatory laws, policies, social norms and stereotypes. Widely adopted human development measures, such as those developed by UNDP, have widened recognition of the challenges of poverty and inequality, enabling many countries to better understand and track multiple and overlapping causes and manifestations.[28] The Inequality-Adjusted Human Development Index, for example, calculates the human development costs of inequality by country.[29]

Drivers of inequality within and between countries relate to a range of different issues.[30] Climate change, for example, often disproportionately affects the poorest, most marginalized and least resilient (e.g., poorer subsistence farmers or people who live in informal housing on flood plains), who contribute the least to climate change. Inequitable distribution of the costs and benefits of the use of natural resources, the costs of pollution and environmental degradation can reinforce patterns of inequality.

Poverty and inequality often result when the poorest and most marginalized lose access to natural resources that they depend on for their livelihoods — e.g., lands, fishing grounds and forests. A lack of land tenure security and of inheritance rights are fundamental drivers of inequality, especially for women, indigenous groups, minorities, and rural populations. Lack of political representation, access to justice, access to information, access to and use of ICTs (called the "digital divide") can also result in deepening inequalities. There is a positive correlation between high income inequality and high crime and imprisonment rates,[31] with most prisoners facing even further socioeconomic exclusion and stigma after release, leading to an endless cycle of poverty, marginalization, criminality and imprisonment.

Political, economic and social instabilities bring new risks and growing vulnerabilities that can aggravate and perpetuate inequalities, including insecure and

informal work and incomes, breakdown of social systems as a result of urbanization and exposure to a volatile global economy and price fluctuations.

People face differential risks of vulnerabilities to conflict and disasters and people living in conflict-affected or fragile States are particularly difficult to reach. Foreign occupation, colonial domination, all forms of apartheid and racist government are classic drivers of gross inequalities, with severe impacts both while they endure, and for generations afterwards in their wake. Protracted displacement creates extremely high levels of social and economic inequality and erodes people's resilience.[32]

Many inequalities emerge as a result of the way markets operate and are (or are not) regulated, and how production factors are rewarded, as well as a result of the ways in which rules are structured at national and international levels in trade and financial systems. In an increasingly open and interconnected world economy, national and global inequality dynamics are closely interrelated, with structural shifts and changing production patterns in the global economy affecting inequalities both within and between countries.[33]

There are also structural inequalities arising from differences in productivity that exist between countries and between different sectors of economies, and which are driven by technological, market power or industrial-relations dynamics, among others. Inequalities include intergenerational disparities (as subsequent generations are left with poorer natural resources) and spatial or geographical inequalities (e.g., the divide between rural-urban areas, between industrialized-non-industrialized regions, or between central-remote regions or between developed-developing countries, small island States-landlocked States etc.).[34]

IV. The United Nations mandate for sustainable — and more equitable — development

A. The 2030 Agenda: an agenda for equality and leaving no one behind

As a result of rising awareness of this threat, Member States have instilled the imperative to "leave no one behind" and to combat inequalities and discrimination at the heart of the new agenda for more sustainable development.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development marks a sharp shift in the development paradigm. It responds to the critique that, while important progress was achieved under the Millennium Development Goals, too much attention was focused on statistical averages and national aggregates, obscuring the rise in inequalities and glossing over the persistence of structural discrimination. Where sufficient attention was not paid to who was winning and who was losing from various types of development policies, Millennium Development Goals efforts often failed to address rising inequalities.[35] The 2030 Agenda reflects the will of the global community and gives the United Nations a mandate — and indeed a duty — to assist Member States in meeting this imperative in the implementation of the new Agenda.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Outcome Document:

- **Identifies rising inequalities within and among countries as an immense challenge that must be confronted:** It sees "rising inequalities within and among countries", "enormous disparities of opportunity, wealth and power", and "gender inequality" as some of the "immense challenges" confronting the world.[36] It identifies inequality as a factor that can "give rise to violence, insecurity and injustice"[37] and declares that "combating inequality within and among countries" is necessary for achieving poverty eradication, preserving the planet, creating sustainable economic growth and fostering social inclusion.[38] It aims to build "just and inclusive societies" that provide "equal access to justice" and that "are based on respect for human rights."[39]

- **Anchors the imperative to address inequalities in the normative basis of Member States' existing human rights commitments to secure equality and non-discrimination for all:** The whole Agenda is guided by "the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, including full respect for international law" and is "explicitly grounded in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, international human rights treaties, the Millennium Declaration and the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document", as well as the Declaration on the Right to Development[40] and "other international instruments relating to human rights and international law."[41] Very significantly, it is "to be implemented in a manner that is consistent with the rights and obligations of States under international law,"[42] which include obligations to combat discrimination and inequalities.[43] The Agenda therefore declares a determination to "to *realize* the human rights of all,"[44] to promote and achieve gender equality,[45] to "end all forms of discrimination against all women and girls"[46] and to "ensure that all human beings can fulfil their potential in ... equality."[47] It resolves to combat inequalities within countries, to establish just and inclusive societies, to protect human rights.[48] It envisages a "just, equitable, tolerant, open and socially inclusive" world of "equality and non-discrimination; of respect for race, ethnicity and cultural diversity; and of equal opportunity."[49] All States are "to respect, protect and promote human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without distinction of any kind as to race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth, disability or other status."[50] Importantly, it is explicitly directed both to "ensure equal opportunity" and to "reduce inequalities of outcome."[51]

- **Aims at addressing inequalities throughout all the Sustainable Development Goals, including Goals 5 and 10:** So central is the challenge of inequality to the 2030 Agenda that two of the 17 Goals are entirely dedicated to this objective. One is directed at reducing inequality within and among countries (Goal 10), and another at achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls (Goal 5). However, all the Sustainable Development Goals and their targets aim to achieve more equitable development. Education, for example, is to be "*inclusive and equitable*" and gender disparities eliminated,[52] and all girls and boys are to complete free, *equitable* and quality primary and secondary education.[53] *Equal access* is ensured for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university.[54] All people, irrespective of sex, age, race, ethnicity, and persons

with disabilities, migrants, indigenous peoples, children, and youth, especially those in vulnerable situations, are to have access to life-long learning opportunities.[55] And persons in vulnerable situations, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations, are to be provided with *equal access* to all levels of education and vocational training.[56]

- Similarly, the Agenda targets universal and *equitable* access to safe and affordable drinking water for all,[57] and promises the development of infrastructure with a focus on *equitable* access for all.[58] Specific targets seek to promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws, and policies,[59] and actions[60] eliminate those laws, policies and practices that are discriminatory,[61] to ensure equal access to justice,[62] and to promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status.[63] Others set out to achieve universal health coverage and access to quality health care,[64] to provide non-discriminatory access to transport systems[65] and to green and public spaces,[66] with special attention to the needs of those in vulnerable situations, women, children, persons with disabilities and older persons,[67] and to promote fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources.[68]

- **Focuses on leaving no one behind:** The Agenda pledges that no one will be left behind and that the goals and targets are to be met "for all peoples and for all segments of society", and that efforts will be made "to reach the furthest behind first."[69] It recognizes that "people who are vulnerable must be empowered", and includes explicitly children, youth, persons with disabilities, people living with HIV/AIDS, older persons, indigenous peoples, refugees, internally displaced persons, migrants, people living in poverty and in areas affected by complex humanitarian emergencies and in areas affected by terrorism,[70] and people living under colonial and foreign occupation.[71] It envisages a world where women and girls enjoy full gender equality and all legal, social and economic barriers to their empowerment are removed.[72] It pledges as well to ensure full respect for the human rights of migrants regardless of migration status, of refugees and of displaced persons, and seeks to strengthen the resilience of host communities.[73] The World Humanitarian Summit in May 2016 also recognized the centrality of inclusion, non-discrimination, and not leaving anyone behind.

- **Makes gender equality a particular priority:** The Agenda states that the Sustainable Development Goals seek to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls.[74] It pledges "significant increase in investments to close the gender gap and strengthen support for institutions in relation to gender equality and the empowerment of women at the global, regional and national levels." All forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls are to be eliminated and the Agenda should be implemented with a "systematic mainstreaming of a gender perspective."[75] Specific targets aim to end all forms of discrimination and violence against all women and girls,[76] including the elimination of harmful practices such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation,[77] and to adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels.[78] Others aim to eliminate gender disparities at all levels of education, ensure equal access to

all levels of education and vocational training,[79] and ensure that all learners acquire education for gender equality.[80] Others aim to ensure women's equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life[81] and universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights.[82] The empowerment of women and girls includes legal and policy measures to ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health by enabling them to make autonomous decisions concerning their own sexuality and reproductive rights. In terms of women's economic empowerment, targets include ensuring full and productive employment and decent work, achieve equal pay for work of equal value,[83] and the need to recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work, and to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources.[84]

- **Reflects an imperative to reduce income inequalities as well as eradicating poverty:** The Agenda observes that sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth will only be possible if wealth is shared and income inequality is addressed.[85] It includes targets to eradicate extreme poverty[86] and to "ensure that all men and women, in particular the poor and vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services, ownership and control over land and other forms of property, inheritance, natural resources..."[87] It includes targets to progressively achieve and sustain income growth of the bottom 40 per cent of the population at a rate higher than the national average,[88] and to adopt policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies to progressively achieve greater equality,[89] including promoting full and productive employment and decent work for all. There are targets to improve the regulation and monitoring of global financial markets and institutions and strengthen the implementation of such regulations.[90] Other elements are directed to remedying key policy lapses that have contributed to growing income inequality, including universal health coverage, labour rights, decent jobs, social protection, inclusive education, and so on.

- **Includes a focus on intergenerational equity for sustainable development:** The Agenda states an intention to protect the planet "so that it can support the needs of the present *and future generations*,"[91] and to implement the Agenda "for the full benefit of all, for today's generation and for future generations."[92]

- **Aims to reduce inequalities between countries:** The Agenda pledges to combat inequalities among countries,[93] noting that progress has been uneven, particularly in Africa, least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, and small-island developing States,[94] and expressing a "wish to see the Goals and targets met for all nations."[95] To these ends, it contains commitments to promote a non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system[96] under the World Trade Organization,[97] to broaden and strengthen the participation of developing countries in the institutions of global governance,[98] and to implement the principle of special and differential treatment for developing countries, in particular least developed countries, in accordance with World Trade Organization agreements.[99]

- It reaffirms the Doha Declaration on the TRIPS Agreement and Public Health and affirms the right of developing countries to make use of flexibilities to protect public health and provide access to medicines for their populations.[100] In addition, targets are set to encourage official development assistance and financial flows, including foreign direct investment, to States where the need is greatest, in particular least developed countries, African countries, small-island developing States, and landlocked developing countries.[101] Others will ensure enhanced representation and voice for developing countries in decision-making in global international economic and financial institutions.[102]

- **Commits to measuring and monitoring the reduction of inequalities over the next 15 years:** The Agenda commits to "developing broader measures of progress to complement gross domestic product (GDP),"[103] and recognizes that disaggregated data will be needed to help with the measurement of progress and to ensure that no one is left behind.[104] Follow-up and review processes at all levels are to be "people-centred, gender-sensitive, respect human rights, and have a particular focus on the poorest, most vulnerable and those furthest behind".[105] All data is to be disaggregated by income, sex, age, race, ethnicity, migration status, disability and geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts.[106] To these ends, the outcome document calls for support to be provided to developing countries in strengthening the capacity of national statistical offices[107] and data systems to ensure access to data[108] disaggregated by income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts.[109]

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is thus, in large measure, an agenda for equality. Member States have chosen to put the fight against inequalities and discrimination at the core of the new Agenda, providing a compelling new political mandate for the United Nations system.

B. The United Nations standing mandate on equality and non-discrimination

The United Nations system also has a standing legal mandate and a central duty to promote and encourage respect for human rights, including the principles of equality and non-discrimination, through the 1945 Charter of the United Nations, which sets out that one of the core purposes of the United Nations is:

> "To achieve international co-operation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural, or humanitarian character, and in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion" (Article 1 of the Charter of the United Nations).

The 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, also emphasizes that "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights" and requires the creation of a social and international order in which all human rights can be fully realized. Many subsequent international human rights treaties give substance to this vision, including by defining and expanding the grounds of discrimination that are prohibited under international human rights law. The 1986 Declaration on the Right to Development further calls for more equitable and non-discriminatory development, with the meaningful participation of all and the fair distribution of benefits of development.

Example: **Convention on the Rights of the Child, art. 2**

1. States Parties shall respect and ensure the rights set forth in the present Convention to each child within their jurisdiction without discrimination of any kind, irrespective of the child's or his or her parent's or legal guardian's race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status.

2. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that the child is protected against all forms of discrimination or punishment on the basis of the status, activities, expressed opinions, or beliefs of the child's parents, legal guardians, or family members.

Equality and non-discrimination are fundamental principles of international human rights law as codified by the United Nations, and are essential to the exercise and enjoyment of all civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights prohibits discrimination of any kind as to "race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status", which has the intention or effect of nullifying or impairing the equal enjoyment or exercise of a human right. The inclusion of "other status" indicates that this list is not exhaustive and international human rights mechanisms have since specified that "other status" includes discrimination on the basis of age (with attention to youth and older persons), nationality, marital and family status, sexual orientation and gender identity, health status (including HIV), place of residence, economic and social situation, and civil, political or other status. The principles of equality and non-discrimination are included in all the core United Nations human rights treaties[110] and have been defined in detail by the bodies that monitor the implementation of the treaties.[111] These principles are also central to ILO labour conventions (for example, the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111) defines discrimination as any distinction, exclusion or preference made on the basis of race, colour, sex, religion, political opinion, national extraction or social origin which has the effect of nullifying or impairing equality of opportunity or treatment in employment or occupation).

Expanding the grounds for the disaggregation of data is thus critical for meeting obligations of non-discrimination and equality. While the listed prohibited grounds of discrimination may not easily translate into operational definitions and characteristics for producing disaggregated data in all instances, they constitute a universally accepted legal standard and an obligation to which Governments are already committed. As such they provide authoritative guidance for data disaggregation efforts, at global, regional, national and subnational levels and

should also guide efforts to use data to capture the impact of intersecting forms of discrimination.

The responsibilities of the United Nations system in promoting equality and non-discrimination are thus not merely a political or policy choice, but a core mandate and duty under the Charter of the United Nations and international law adopted under United Nations auspices. The United Nations system must hold true to these norms and standards in all its efforts to assist Member States in fulfilling the human rights obligations into which they have themselves voluntarily entered, as well as in meeting the Sustainable Development Goals. Indeed, the 2030 Agenda calls for implementation to be in a manner fully consistent with international law, including international human rights law, and recognizes the role of the United Nations system in supporting Member States in this implementation.[112]

V. Conceptual framework: a United Nations approach to inequalities and discrimination

United Nations approach to "Leaving no one behind" in support of Sustainable Development Goal implementation

The United Nations approach to "leaving no one behind" is not only about reaching the poorest of the poor, but will seek to combat discrimination and rising inequalities within and among countries — and their root causes. This is grounded in the United Nations normative standards, including the principles of equality and non-discrimination that are foundational principles of the Charter of the United Nations, international human rights law and national legal systems across the world.

"Leaving no one behind" means moving beyond assessing average and aggregate progress, towards ensuring progress for all population groups at a disaggregated level. This will require disaggregating data to identify who is being excluded or discriminated against, how and why, as well as who is experiencing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination and inequalities. It will mean identifying unjust, avoidable or extreme inequalities in outcome and opportunities, and patterns of discrimination in law, policies and practices. It will mean addressing patterns of exclusion, structural constraints and unequal power relations that produce and reproduce inequalities over generations, and moving towards both formal and substantive equality for all groups in society. This will requires supporting legal, policy, institutional and other measures to promote equality and reverse the trend of rising inequalities. It will also require free, active and meaningful participation of all stakeholders, particularly the most marginalized, in mechanisms for ensuring accountability, recourse and remedies to all.

The United Nations approach — like the 2030 Agenda itself — is anchored in the United Nations normative standards on equality and non-discrimination, as defined in international human rights law agreed under United Nations auspices, including the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other human rights treaties, including the labour conventions. It should

also be underpinned by the concept of equity defined in other human rights instruments such as the Declaration on the Right to Development.

This entails a focus on three closely-related but distinct concepts: ***equality*** (that is, the imperative of moving towards substantive equality of opportunity and outcomes for all groups), ***non-discrimination*** (defined as the prohibition of discrimination against individuals and groups on the grounds identified in international human rights treaties) and the broader concept of ***equity*** (understood as fairness in the distribution of costs, benefits and opportunities).

From this perspective, it is important to identify:

- **Horizontal and vertical inequalities in opportunities and outcomes:** Horizontal inequalities are the inequalities are those that exist between ethnic and other population groups. Vertical inequalities are the inequalities between individuals or households that are not related to group-based distinctions. While horizontal inequalities have been shown to be correlated with a higher risk of violent social conflict, the data suggests that extreme vertical inequalities (e.g., extreme income inequalities) risk destabilizing political, economic and social systems as evidenced above.

- **Discrimination and multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination:** Discrimination is the inequitable treatment of individuals on the basis of grounds such as gender, race, age, ethnicity, disability, indigenous identity or other status identified in the international treaties. Many individuals face multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination that exacerbate their disadvantage. This means, for example, that an elderly, indigenous woman with disabilities may face intersecting and overlapping forms of discrimination on the basis of gender, age, her indigenous status and her disability that will result in greater marginalization and exclusion from social, economic and political life.

- **Equity and fairness:** Equity can be understood as the fair treatment of all population groups in society (as a number of United Nations agencies define it). This overlaps with the concept of "equality" but is not identical to it. While equity brings a helpful focus on "fairness", the concept of "equality" brings an additional focus on legal protection, particularly for groups that are discriminated against (e.g., gender equality and racial equality are legally binding obligations institutionalized in most national and international legal systems).

This normative approach thus requires focusing on systematically identifying and addressing both "horizontal" and "vertical" inequalities.

Horizontal inequalities between population groups are often the direct or indirect result of discriminatory laws, policies or practices or structural constraints (as set out clearly in Sustainable Development Goals 5 and 10). Identifying horizontal inequalities in both opportunities and outcomes between different population groups can serve as a useful proxy for measuring the impacts of direct or indirect discrimination or such structural constraints. Clearly not all horizontal inequalities between population groups are unjust, nor are all "disparities" in outcomes between population groups due to discrimination.[113] However, where systematic horizontal inequalities are observed, these inequalities

are more likely to be unjust and the result of circumstances or barriers beyond the individual's control. This could include, e.g., consistently unequal health outcomes of minorities compared to the majority population, or systematically lower wages for women compared with men.

Assessing horizontal inequalities can rely on the wealth of this kind of data already produced in regional and national Human Development Reports identifying horizontal inequalities in outcomes and opportunities[114] and the development of greater disaggregation for the Sustainable Development Goal indicators will make more data available. Quantitative data may also need to be supplemented with other kinds of data that assess people's experiences of exclusion or discriminatory treatment and to more precisely measure discrimination, e.g., perception surveys on experiences of discriminatory treatment, or the collection of data on discriminatory laws (e.g., UNAIDs collects data on laws that are discriminatory in relation to HIV), or event-based data on hate crimes (even where this cannot be used for cross-country comparisons). The Sustainable Development Goal indicators include perception indicators for discrimination (e.g., *Sustainable Development Goal Indicator 10.3.1: Proportion of the population reporting having personally felt discriminated against or harassed within the previous 12 months on the basis of a ground of discrimination prohibited under international human rights law*) (see annex 1 for more details).

It also requires focusing on identifying and addressing **vertical inequalities between individuals,** including the extreme inequalities that may threaten economic and political stability in different country contexts. Vertical inequalities include inequalities between individuals (rather than groups) and are not directly related to group-based status. These can include a range of vertical inequalities across opportunities and outcomes related, e.g., to income and wealth, education, health, etc. In general vertical inequalities are considered to be less likely to produce social conflict than horizontal inequalities, but, as highlighted above, new evidence is now emerging to suggest that when vertical inequalities reach very high levels, they can also produce social unrest and can be a key factor in creating economic instability and limiting the sustainability of economic growth. High levels of income inequality also tend to skew the political and economic system, where wealthy and powerful elites capture the policy-making and regulatory process. A focus on vertical inequalities that raise these risks is particularly important from a normative perspective, given that this can threaten the realization and equal enjoyment of human rights for all.

Assessing vertical inequalities can also use quantitative and qualitative data. The Sustainable Development Goal indicators include an indicator on income inequalities (*10.1.1 Growth rates of household expenditure or income per capita among the bottom 40 per cent of the population and the total population*) but this may not adequately identify the point at which inequalities reach high levels, so this data may need to be supplemented by other measures of income and wealth inequalities (e.g., the *Gini coefficient* before and after social transfers, or the *Palma ratio*[115]) for a fuller picture of trends. It remains difficult to assess at what point income inequalities become too high (although some analyses have suggested that the tipping point is 0.4 measured by the Gini coefficient), and this will depend on different country contexts, but the precise number may be less important than the

concrete impacts of this inequality identified in other ways (e.g., elite capture, or economic crisis linked to inequalities).

It may also be useful to measure data on "relative poverty" and to assess how many and how far individuals are away from the median income, as this suggests that that they may not have an adequate standard of living in the context where they are living. The Sustainable Development Goal indicators already include an indicator (*10.2.1 Proportion of people living below 50 per cent of median income, by age, sex and persons with disabilities*) but this will need to further disaggregated. United Nations human rights law sets minimum standards and thresholds below which no one should be allowed to fall, including "minimum essential levels" for the realization of economic and social rights.[116] The principle of "non-retrogression" also implies that progress in living standards should be continuous and the commitment to use the "maximum" of available resources implies that resources should be ring-fenced during crises and in periods of economic austerity to protect the existing levels of rights realization, or at the very least ensure that the impacts of policy changes do not disproportionately fall on the poorest and most marginalized.

However, it is important to be concerned not only with those at the bottom of the ladder, but also with those at the top, and the gaps between them. A normative perspective is concerned with the relational aspects of inequality, and the power relations between different individuals and between different groups, as well as with the social stigmatization that can result from an inability to participate fully in economic, social and political life. Capturing data on this relational aspect (through, e.g., relative poverty data or data on outcomes and opportunities, as discussed above) is critical for capturing this relational aspect. Human rights law also prohibits discrimination on the basis of grounds that include "property" (interpreted as "income" or "wealth"), which means that it is not permitted to discriminate against the poor or less wealthy.

In order to measure and monitor inequalities and discrimination, **it will be critical to disaggregate to reveal the situation of all categories of people and population groups, whilst putting in place safeguards against risks**. While there are a number of technical, resource and ethical challenges to expanding the number of variables for the disaggregation of data, the obligation of non-discrimination of Member States requires moving towards greater disaggregation with variables that are eventually in line with the grounds of discrimination prohibited under national and international law, including sex, age, race, ethnicity, disability, language, religion, nationality, marital and family status, sexual orientation and gender identity, health status (including HIV), geographic location, migrant, refugee, internally displaced person (IDP) or other status. Identifying those who suffer from **multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination** will also help to identify those who are being left furthest behind that and should be reached first in the practical implementation of the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals. Monitoring disaggregated data will ensure that progress in closing the gaps for those left behind is being made in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

The purpose of this normative approach is to achieve **formal equality as well as substantive equality**. The legal concept of equality is not a simplistic concept (as sometimes (mis)understood) that implies treating all people the same. Nor does it envisage a world without difference. Rather, it is a complex concept that requires

both formal equality and a reasonable level of substantive equality of opportunities and outcomes across all population groups (i.e., horizontal equality).

Formal equality includes the procedural rights that protect equality, including *inter alia* the right to equality before the law, the right to information, the right to participate in decision-making, the principle of free, prior and informed consent, access to justice and the right to remedy.

In turn, **substantive equality** aims to address the horizontal inequalities between population groups that can persist even after formal equality is achieved, given structural disadvantages or different needs. This has been most clearly clarified by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, which has emphasized that the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) "requires that women be given an equal start and that they be empowered by an enabling environment to achieve equality of results. It is not enough to guarantee women treatment that is identical to men. Rather, biological as well as socially and culturally constructed differences between women and men must be taken into account".[117] Achieving substantive equality may imply what can be termed "positive" discrimination, including according extra resources to specific services, affirmative action or temporary special measures to take account of difference, structural disadvantage and historical discrimination. In the context of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the "denial of reasonable accommodation" to take account of different needs is itself understood as a form of discrimination — a reminder that *to achieve equality, unequal situations may need to be treated unequally*.

This also requires **moving towards achieving substantive equality of opportunities and outcomes for all social groups**. Equality of opportunities means that every individual sets off from the same starting point, while equality of outcomes means that each individual or social group achieves a similar end point or outcome. The concept of equality of opportunities for all people is uncontroversial. Equality of outcomes is more complex: an approach grounded in international human rights standards does *not* call for absolute equality of income or wealth for all. But it does call for moving towards equality of outcomes between ethnic and other social groups — for example in education outcomes such as literacy rates (since horizontal inequalities in outcomes occurring between social groups may reflect discrimination). Indeed, many of the Sustainable Development Goal indicators already adopted by Member States are outcome indicators (e.g., indicator *2.1.1 Prevalence of undernourishment* or indicator *4.6.1 Percentage of population in a given age group achieving at least a fixed level of proficiency in functional (a) literacy and (b) numeracy skills*.[118]) It will be critical to assess progress on these outcomes with data for all social groups, rather than looking only at country averages or aggregates. With regard to income inequality, a human rights approach would not call for equal incomes, but would call for moving towards greater equality in incomes and wealth in situations where inequalities have become extreme enough to threaten stability, undercut democratic processes, and harm the realization of human rights, including the right to an adequate standard of living for all.

An approach grounded in international standards should also focus on achieving **equity at national and global levels**. The Universal Declaration of

Human Rights requires the creation of "a social *and international order* in which all human rights can be realized", and the Declaration on the Right to Development calls for "eradicating all social injustices", promoting "equality of opportunity for all" and ensuring the "fair distribution of the benefits" as well as eliminating obstacles to development at the national and international levels. This means addressing inequities, barriers and structural constraints that exist at both national and international levels which reproduce structures and patterns of unequal development within and between States. In the context of sustainable development, the concept of **intergenerational equity**, which considers the rights of both current and future generations, as well as justice in relationship between the generations, is also increasingly important. In the context of youth unemployment and poverty, and their role in protests and social movements, a focus on youth empowerment is critical.

Finally, the design, planning and implementation of programmes and activities aiming to combat inequalities and discrimination for the 2030 Agenda should be conducted in an **inclusive manner**, that is by fostering the free, active and meaningful participation of all key stakeholders in society, including decision-makers at all levels (global, regional, national and local), civil society actors and scientific and academic communities, as well as taking account of the role of a responsible private sector. To this end, human rights-based approaches to programming reflecting the principles of non-discrimination and participation are helpful, as endorsed by the United Nations Development Group in 2005 and referenced in guidance on the preparation of United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs).

VI. Implementation: a United Nations Shared Framework for Action

As set out in the CEB Statement of Commitment, the United Nations must put "the imperative to combat inequalities and discrimination at the forefront of United Nations efforts to support implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development".

The United Nations system should contribute to realizing the objectives of the 2030 Agenda and turning the tide of rising inequalities. This will require the United Nations to move beyond "business as usual", with a comprehensive and integrated approach to support the reduction of inequalities at national and international levels. It will require deeper understandings of inequalities and their root causes across all sectors of society, promoting policies that effectively reduce inequality and dismantle discrimination, enabling greater voice and participation of the most marginalized, disadvantaged, excluded or vulnerable groups and facilitating more systematic tracking and accountability for progress to ensure that no one is left behind.

While there will be multiple entry points for United Nations entities to engage in this effort, in accordance with their respective mandates, the United Nations will have more effective impact by working together under a shared framework for action. The High-level Committee on Programmes, as the principal mechanism for system-wide coordination on policy and programming, including for the system-

wide follow-up of intergovernmental processes, has a crucial role to play in leading strategic policy direction, strengthening policy coherence across the system and strengthening common tools to address this imperative.

This "Shared Framework for Action on Combating Inequalities and Discrimination" thus sets out a common approach for the systematic integration of inequality, discrimination and equity issues into the United Nations support for Member States in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. It focuses on institutionalizing the United Nations strategic commitment, supporting a comprehensive package of policies and programme support to reduce inequalities and dismantle discrimination, identifying common tools and methodologies for analysis and monitoring, as well as strengthening accountability for results. Under the umbrella of the overarching policy guidance of the CEB, the global thinking and policy coherence advanced by the High-level Committee on Programmes will be operationalized and translated into country-level actions through the United Nations Development Group, respecting the different processes.

A. Institutionalizing the United Nations commitment to equality

Addressing rising inequalities will require strong commitment from the United Nations system and from all entities to align their strategic frameworks, guidance and plans of action with this imperative.

A number of United Nations entities already have a clear mandate to work on issues of inequality and discrimination as a core part of their strategic priorities.[119] Other United Nations entities have worked to align their strategic and results frameworks for the next five years with the 2030 Agenda, with a focus on this imperative of "leaving no one behind" and combating inequalities and discrimination.[120]/*

Most United Nations entities have already made strong commitments to promote gender equality and end gender-based discrimination, including through adherence to the United Nations System-wide Action Plan (UN-SWAP) on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women under the leadership of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), and endorsed by the CEB. The UN-SWAP has greatly strengthened internal commitment with its indicators for monitoring progress within each organization and is now being extended externally for monitoring progress on the cross-cutting commitments to gender equality in the 2030 Agenda. There are also other system-wide strategic commitments, including the recent adoption, on 9 May 2016, of a "System-Wide Action Plan on the rights of indigenous peoples", whereby United Nations entities committed to support the realization of indigenous peoples' rights in the implementation and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

A number of agencies have further adopted important internal policy guidance putting the imperative of human rights and equality at the heart of their work.

Example: **United Nations Environment Programme internal policy guidance**

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) has developed "Policy Guidance on Environment, Human Rights and Addressing Inequalities: Integrating Human Rights in the UNEP Organizational Culture and Programmatic Activities" which shows how environmental sustainability requires enabling legal frameworks, including the exercise of human rights, such as the rights to information, public participation in decision-making and access to justice. The objective of the Policy Guidance is to enable UNEP to integrate human rights — and the core priorities of addressing discrimination and inequalities — into its organizational culture and programmatic activities, including for its support for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda (see **annex II** for more details).

Every United Nations entity should consider individually and collectively how best to align their strategic frameworks, plans of action and policy guidance with this imperative in their work on the Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda.

The High-level Committee on Programmes can provide a space for reflection on meeting this objective at the collective level and can help generate a more joint and integrated response. The High-level Committee should also play a role in guiding the system on this global policy issue, maintaining a regular scanning of rising inequalities and overall trends at the national and global levels as part of ensuring a collective response by the United Nations system as a whole (see also section VII on next steps).

B. Policies and programme support to reduce inequalities

Rising inequalities are not inevitable. As highlighted above, they are the product of the policies, laws, regulations, institutions, cultural practices, structural barriers, democratic deficits, and concentrations of wealth and power — the "rules of the game" — that shape the economy and political and social systems.

This fact was not lost on the drafters of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It is, in large measure, an agenda for equality. Member States have chosen to put the fight against inequalities and discrimination at the core of the new Agenda, providing a strong mandate for the United Nations system to contribute to that fight. If it is to serve this agenda, the United Nations system must have a comprehensive package of support for policies, programmes and institutions that will help to reduce inequalities and dismantle discrimination.

Thus, a comprehensive and coherent **United Nations package of policy and programme support** to combat discrimination and inequalities and to advance the goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda will include:

At the country level

- Programmes to promote institutions, laws, policies, and actions to **combat discrimination** on the basis of race, sex, language, ethnicity, religion, age,

disability, caste, indigenous status, health status, migrant status, minority status or other grounds, and to **advance equal access to justice**.

- Support for **reducing spatial or geographical inequalities between rural-urban areas and/or between industrialized-non-industrialized or remote regions**, including by promoting responsible and socially inclusive investments.
- Initiatives **promoting gender equality** and eliminating all forms of discrimination and violence against women, investments to close the gender gap and strengthen support for institutions for gender equality and the empowerment of women.
- Support for **strengthening economic governance**, regulation, accountability and the rule of law in the economic sphere.
- Support for **full employment** and inclusive economic policies, promoting decent work.
- Support to eliminate employment discrimination and to **reinforce labour rights**, including decent work, minimum wages (including for migrant workers), freedom of association and collective bargaining, and the eradication of forced and child labour.
- Initiatives to combat all forms of age discrimination against older persons in employment, as well as to promote **youth employment and socioeconomic inclusion of all ages**, and to address the vulnerability of young people to higher unemployment and lower quality of jobs as well as to longer and more insecure school-to-work transitions.
- Assistance for **social protection systems** that reduce inequalities by providing a safety net that maintains the right to an adequate standard of living for all. **Support for universal health coverage**, for universal access to health care and to be free of catastrophic out-of-pocket expenditure as a result of health costs that produce poverty and inequality.
- Programmes for universal access to **education, water, sanitation, care** and other economic and social rights to promote greater equality in opportunities and outcomes.
- Assistance in achieving universal **access to ICTs** and the narrowing of the digital divide.
- Programmes to support **redistributive fiscal policy and progressive taxation** and to reverse extreme concentrations of wealth and progressively achieve greater equality.
- Assistance **for tackling illicit outflows and tax evasion**.
- Support to strengthen the protection of freedom of expression, association, and assembly, to insulate **democratic institutions and processes** from elite political capture, to ensure equal political participation for all women and men, and to promote public access to information.
- Programmes to reinforce **private sector accountability**, including implementing the *Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights* and to

ensure effective regulation of business by Governments, as well as **social, environmental and human rights impact assessments** and due diligence safeguards to prevent negative impacts.

- **Support for measures to protect vulnerable, marginalized and excluded communities** in prevention and mitigation of the impacts of, and building resilience to, climate, natural disasters, desertification, land degradation and humanitarian crises.

At the regional level

- Provide a **bridge between the global and national levels**, including by adapting and incorporating elements of the equality framework into regional policy frameworks and transmitting them to the country level, and feeding back national experiences to the global agenda.
- **Conduct studies/share best practices** to deepen the understanding of the multiple dimensions of inequality identified in this framework.
- **Develop indicators and operational guidelines** to follow up on the implementation of regionally or internationally agreed agendas at the national and local levels.
- As part of the follow-up and review of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, review in the regional forums on sustainable development the status of **implementation of the agenda for equality** and build on the experience and sectoral guidance of the regional commissions' intergovernmental subsidiary bodies.
- Promote **pro-equality public policies** as core elements of the regional development agenda.

At the global level

- Promotion of a more **equitable global trading system** that addresses inequities built into existing trade rules, particularly for the least developed countries, and implements the principle of special and differential treatment.
- Development of a more **equitable international financial system**, including better regulation of global financial markets and of speculation, the equitable participation of all States in the institutions of global governance, as identified in the 2030 Agenda, and ODA to countries with people in greatest need.
- Reinforcing **national policy space** to promote inequality-reducing measures and to correct policy incoherence between intellectual property and trade rules, public health and human rights, including by implementing the TRIPS Agreement on Public Health.
- Cooperating for **technology transfer** to promote greater equality.
- Implementing an equitable **international migration system** that recognizes the human rights of all migrants and refugees.

Many of these areas are already a part of the policy and programme support of various United Nations entities — and a range of examples of what United Nations entities are already doing in this regard is included at annex I.

However, there remains an urgent need to ensure that the United Nations system works together in a more strategic, coordinated and integrated way for comprehensive and coherent action at the global and national levels. This requires a common understanding of patterns of inequalities and discrimination in different global and national contexts, and orienting policy support and programming of the United Nations system around addressing root causes, while taking account of the comparative advantages/roles of each agency and building collaboration.

The CEB, through the High-level Committee on Programmes, can play a role in reviewing the overall package of support that the United Nations system is delivering, identifying gaps or problem areas and fostering more policy coherence and programme coordination, leveraging the mandates of different agencies for greater effectiveness and considering impacts in all countries, given the universal applicability of the Sustainable Development Goals. The United Nations system can then build on and operationalize these efforts on the ground in countries where the United Nations has a physical presence.

C. Tools for equality/equity analysis, measurement and monitoring

Addressing this imperative will also require a system-wide approach to "leaving no one behind", the sharing of tools for equality/equity analysis to identify patterns and monitor trends, identifying who is being left behind and why.

1. *Analysis*

In relation to analytical tools, the United Nations system must build on but make more systematic use of existing tools and expertise in the analysis and identification of inequalities and their causes, learning from practice and investing in what works, as well as adopting new and innovative tools and methodologies, including to capture the key elements identified in the conceptual approach outlined above in section V. This should include:

1. **Adopting a common approach to "leaving no one behind":** As highlighted above, the United Nations approach to "leaving no one behind" is not only about reaching the poorest of the poor, but will require analysis of persistent discrimination and rising inequalities within and among countries and their root causes, in line with the commitments of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the United Nations human rights standards for equality and non-discrimination. This should seek to identify unjust, avoidable or extreme inequalities in outcome and opportunities and their root causes, including discrimination in law, policy and practice, structural constraints and unequal relations of power.

2. **Advocating and supporting greater disaggregation of data for all Sustainable Development Goal indicators** across a wider range of grounds will also be critical, including harmonized and standardized disaggregated data-sharing protocols. Member States already committed to disaggregation in the 2030 Agenda,

which calls for "high-quality, timely and reliable data disaggregated by income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts" (see target 17.18, as well as 74 €) and the approved list of Sustainable Development Goal indicators also includes a similar introductory paragraph (See **annex I**). The United Nations system's position should support the expansion of the grounds of disaggregation of data, in line with this 2030 Agenda commitment, and in line with the grounds of discrimination prohibited under international human rights standards, while recognizing technical, resource and capacity constraints. In addition, it should promote harmonized and standardized data-sharing protocols.

3. **Adopting guidance on safeguards for the ethical and human rights risks of documenting marginalized groups**, building on existing guidance already produced by different entities.[121] This should take account of existing efforts to expand the disaggregation of data, including work with national statistical offices and ongoing efforts under the United Nations Development Group policy support mechanism, and planned United Nations Development Group integrated country missions which will advise on alignment of national plans with the Sustainable Development Goals, and UNDP's work to strengthen local capacities and national statistical offices to provide disaggregated data.

4. **Carrying out systematic analysis of all available disaggregated data and other quantitative and qualitative data collected on and by marginalized groups**, including data available from national statistical offices, as well as non-traditional data collectors, such as organizations working with marginalized communities, national human rights institutions and local advocates and communities' own data. This should take account of existing efforts under way under the United Nations Development Group's localization of the Sustainable Development Goals in working with national and local actors,[122] and the use of existing analysis and data from national and international human rights mechanisms. It should further require the disclosure of information by national authorities.[123] Further, efforts are needed to ensure the integration of community-based data and perspectives from marginalized groups with official data from national statistical offices.

5. **Incorporating new tools for analysis of both horizontal and vertical inequalities, as well as discrimination, stigma and exclusion and equity issues**, to understand the depth and extent of inequalities and discrimination across the economic, social, political, environmental and other domains, in line with the conceptual framework discussed in section V of this paper. The Sustainable Development Goal indicators already include a range of indicators that directly measure discrimination and many vertical inequalities, and disaggregated data will enable the measurement of horizontal inequalities (See **annex I for a list of indicators relevant for inequalities**). There may nonetheless be a need for supplementary indicators for a fuller picture of the situation of inequality. For example, the Sustainable Development Goal indicators include some indicators on income inequalities, but for a fuller picture there may be a need to use additional indicators, for, e.g., measuring the Gini coefficient before and after social transfers and the Palma ratio. New measures of horizontal and gender inequalities, environmental inequalities and Sustainable Development Goal localization initiatives with local advocates and citizen groups are also being developed which

can be used along with established tools such as the UNDP Inequality-Adjusted Human Development Index and the Gender Inequality Index.

6. **Identifying the groups affected by multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination,** as these are the groups who are usually left furthest behind. More effort will be need to develop methodologies to analyse how multiple forms of discrimination intersect and compound to form unique experiences of discrimination and the challenges that this poses to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals among those furthest behind (see the graph below for an example of one possible methodology).

7. **Strengthening joined-up analysis of root causes and underlying determinants and drivers** of inequalities and discrimination, and identifying structural constraints, in order to design the most effective policy and programme responses. Analysis of inequalities and discrimination should also be combined with other types of relevant analysis produced by all the United Nations pillars, including development, human rights, conflict, political and humanitarian analysis. The principles of humanity and impartiality require strong focus on aid distribution without any discrimination, and on vulnerabilities to be included in humanitarian programmes and planning exercises, to ensure the most vulnerable are not left behind and to ensure equal access to assistance and services, and funding to the most vulnerable and marginalized in responding. This should also examine new analytical tools that examine the dynamic processes by which people move into and out of poverty, how some people and groups are left behind and how inequalities deepen over time.[124] This includes, for instance, time use surveys that illustrate inequalities between men and women or tools that identify the impact of disadvantages such as disability resulting from the extra costs for adjustment as well as lack of accessibility, discrimination, stigma and negative attitudes.[125] New methodologies have also been developed to analyse inequalities in the chances of survival of children and adults, whereby the monitoring of progress in reducing inequalities assumes the analysis over time of these inequalities.[126]

8. **In relation to United Nations programmes, incorporating *ex ante* and *ex post* impact analyses** as well as social, environmental and human rights impact analysis, in order to assess the potential future impacts of United Nations activities on the situation of inequalities and discrimination for all groups at the national and global levels, to ensure that United Nations activities avoid exacerbating inequalities and that the situation improves rather than deteriorates as a result of United Nations intervention.

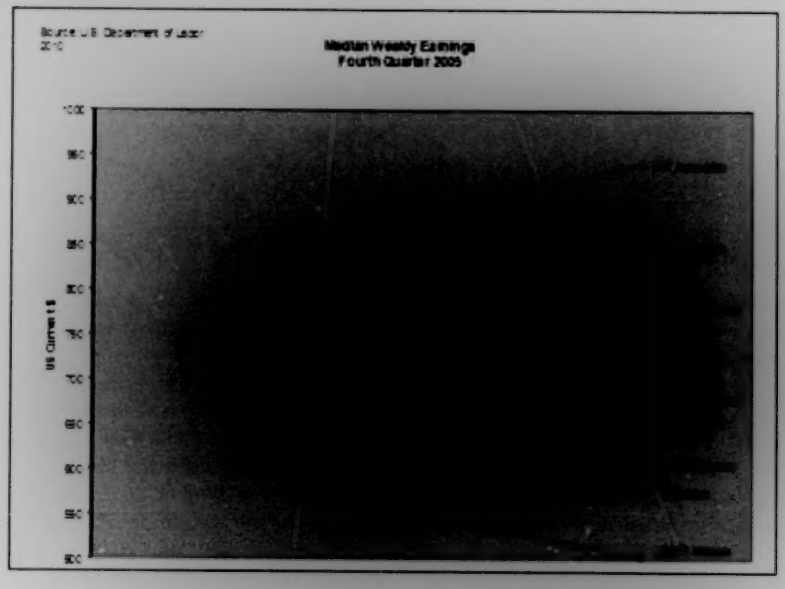
Many United Nations entities, as well as a range of United Nations Development Group guidance materials, already incorporate a focus on inequalities, discrimination and equity issues into their analysis at the global and country levels to identify patterns of inequalities and discrimination. At the country level, United Nations processes — including the common country assessments of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (CCA/UNDAFs) — already review data on these issues. United Nations Development Group efforts to operationalize the Sustainable Development Goals, including under the mainstreaming, acceleration and policy support (MAPS) initiative, have produced guidelines for Sustainable Development Goal reporting to facilitate the preparation of national Sustainable Development Goal reports, revised the guidance on common country

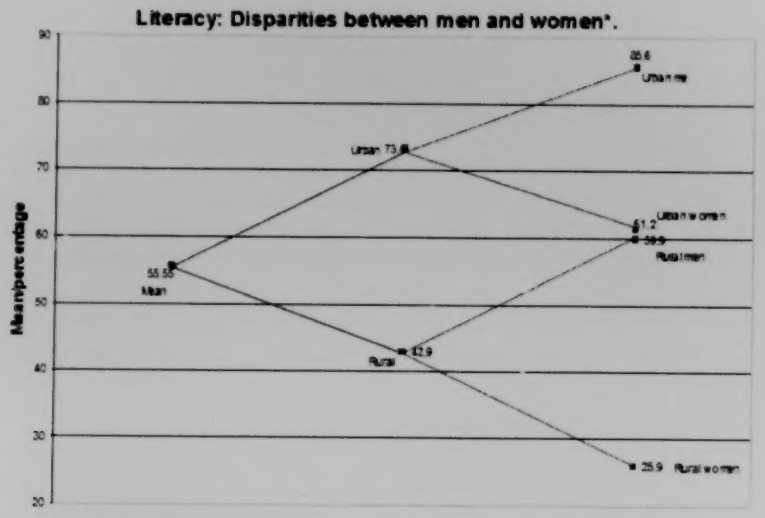
assessment for the United Nations system, and developed policy and operational messages for the integration of human rights into the 2030 Agenda. The United Nations Development Group also has an explicit mandate to ensure human rights integration across the work of its members and to facilitate coordinated joint programming by United Nations entities at the country level.

The High-level Committee on Programmes could consider reviewing the extent to which the United Nations system has adopted the elements outlined above in its efforts to support the 2030 Agenda at the global policy level, while encouraging incorporation at the operational level through the United Nations Development Group's existing roll-out of the MAPS programme and guidance materials.

Example: **New tools for analysing multiple discrimination can identify those left furthest behind**

(*source*: High-level Committee on Programmes Positioning Paper)





* The percentages refer to men/women who attended secondary school or higher, or can read a whole sentence or part of a sentence.
Source: DHS Liberia, 2007

Guidance on disaggregation of data

Expanding the grounds of disaggregation can raise technical, resource and capacity issues. It will be essential to consider the costs and feasibility of expanding the number of variables captured in nationally representative surveys, since more disaggregation variables will require a greater degree of data stratification, with either a loss in statistical precision and significance (if the sample size remains the same) or will often require a significant increase in the size (and costs) of surveys. Given the limited statistical capacities (and resources) that exist in many less developed countries, this could pose a significant burden on Member States. It will thus be important to generate resources and to upscale capacity-building efforts, but also to consider **taking a staggered approach, prioritizing and sequencing progress towards greater disaggregation**[127] in line with what is required in the 2030 Agenda, and in the commitments of Member States in relation to the prohibited grounds of discrimination in international treaties.

In addition, it will be important to think beyond disaggregation to consider small-scale surveys and other methods to capture incidences and trends of discrimination, leveraging potential contributions of non-traditional sources and collectors of data (e.g., by working with civil society organizations carrying out data collection in specific domains with specific communities). It will also be important to think beyond nationally representative surveys and consider other appropriate methodologies and data sources, such as the use of oversampling or targeted sampling techniques to capture incidences and trends of discrimination on specific groups,[128] as well as leveraging potential contributions of non-traditional sources

and collectors of data, for example, civil society organizations or service providers that carry out data collection in specific domains with specific communities.

Similarly, expanding the variables for data collection raises some serious **ethical challenges** (e.g., censuses often include categories that are inherently political and related to the distribution of State resources, and dominant groups often have incentives to obscure information). In addition, the collection of some types of information can be reviewed as divisive in and of itself (e.g., Rwanda does not compile data on ethnicity, as ethnic identification is seen as a threat to national reconciliation) and there will be a need to consider potential negative consequences for community relations in some contexts. Many groups want to be counted since this is necessary for inclusion in policy-making, but there is a need for safeguards to protect against potential risks (e.g., of data collected on ethnic groups, or LGBTI groups). This needs to ensure the right to privacy, free, prior and informed consent and the participatory principle of "nothing about us without us" to protect against the potential unintended consequences of documenting marginalized groups. A human rights-sensitive approach to data collection, analysis and dissemination should help to ensure protection against the potential misuse of data and invasions of the right to privacy. Lessons can be drawn from existing experiences of many United Nations agencies and countries that have developed strong safeguards on these kinds of issues.[129]

Example: **Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Human Rights approach to data collection and disaggregation**

This sets out a series of core principles for data collection and disaggregation with respect to:

- Participation — Participation of stakeholders in data collection is critical, in particular for the most marginalized groups or "invisible" groups or the organizations that represent them, including with the aim of mitigating any risks of collecting data on those groups (e.g., indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, ethnic and linguistic minorities, LGBTI etc.).
- Self-identification — Data collection should not create or reinforce existing discrimination but always "do no harm", including by respecting personal identity and people's own self-identification.
- Transparency — Data collection must be independent, transparent, and accurate, and respect the rights to seek, receive and impart information of people concerned, in line with the United Nations Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics.
- Privacy — Respecting the right to privacy and confidentiality of individual identification is also essential, particularly with respect to the privacy concerns related to big data and surveillance, and strategies for preventing and mitigating data leaks or security breaches must be put in place.

- Accountability: Accountability refers both to data collection for accountability as well as accountability in data collection. In the first sense, independent statistics, free from political interference, are fundamental tools to inform and hold those in power accountable on their policy actions (or inaction). Moreover, as State institutions, national statistical offices have human rights obligations in their daily exercise of statistical activities.

2. ***Monitoring of progress over time in leaving no one behind***

In relation to monitoring tools, the United Nations system will also need to build on and adapt existing United Nations experiences to find the best tools that can be adapted for Sustainable Development Goal monitoring for ongoing monitoring of progress in achieving the commitment to "leave no one behind" and reducing inequalities.

There is already a large range of innovative methodologies and tools already developed within the United Nations system — see **annex II** for an overview of some important examples. These efforts should include:

1. **Using and building on existing tools for equity/inequalities monitoring that capture progress over time** for the most disadvantaged groups, to ensure that they improve faster than more advantaged groups, to assess whether the gaps, including gender gaps, are being successfully narrowed over time. For example, the World Health Organization (WHO) has developed a range of tools for health inequality monitoring, including monitoring change over time[130] and equity-oriented monitoring in the context of universal health coverage.[131] UNICEF has similarly developed tools for equity monitoring[132] that could be adapted for a range of Sustainable Development Goal targets. UNICEF and WHO have also developed tools to monitor the progressive reduction of inequalities over time for Sustainable Development Goal indicators (see the example graph below).

2. **Using and building on existing methodologies and tools to measure changes in horizontal and vertical inequalities in both opportunities and outcomes** in relation to gender, age and other group identities, such as race, ethnicity, language, religion or others, including tracking budget implementation. These tools should also capture how changing trends in these inequalities affect social, economic and political stability (building on existing methodologies. already developed by, e.g., tools developed by the IMF, World Bank and others), for use in Sustainable Development Goal monitoring. The UNDP inequality adjusted human development index also offers data and a methodology on which to build.

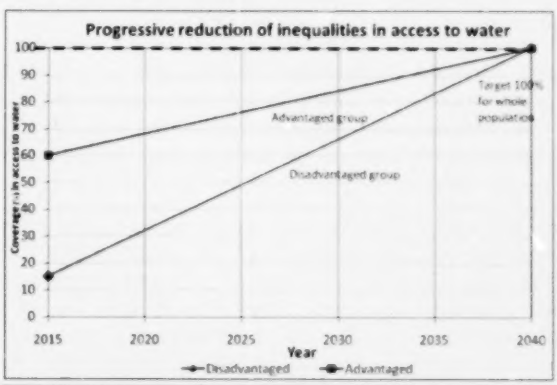
3. **Supporting community-based monitoring and convening participatory consultation with all stakeholders** to assess the extent to which structural and root causes have been addressed, and all communities and rights-holders reached. This could build on existing Sustainable Development Goal advocacy and citizen engagement efforts as well as joint initiatives to localize the Goals through inclusive participatory processes, using a human rights approach, and strengthen the participation of the most marginalized and excluded groups in monitoring processes, community-based monitoring and budget tracking at global, national, municipal and local government levels.

There are already a number of ongoing initiatives on improving monitoring, including efforts by the United Nations Development Group to produce guidance on Sustainable Development Goal reporting and common country assessments (CCA/UNDAFs). The Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) Statistical Division, together with UNICEF, also recently organized an expert group meeting on data disaggregation in 2016 to review national practices and the current status of methods for data disaggregation methodologies, with the aim of generating data for use in national monitoring and the global review and follow-up of the Goals in the High Level Political Forum.

For their part, the High-level Committee on Programmes and the United Nations Development Group can help stimulate more sharing of tools and methodologies across the United Nations system, and ensure that the tools adopted by the United Nations system for Sustainable Development Goal monitoring systematically capture inequality, discrimination and equity issues.

Example: **WHO and UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP) Methodology shows how to monitor the progressive reduction of inequalities over time for Sustainable Development Goal targets**

In the context of water and sanitation, WHO and UNICEF with the Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP) for Water Supply and Sanitation have developed intuitively simple and clear graphic illustrations of progress in reducing inequalities, as illustrated in the simple graphic below.[133] This could be used to show whether the rate of progress of the most marginalized groups is on track compared to the most advantaged groups by assessing progress at interim periods, e.g., 2015, 2020, 2025. Regular monitoring at interim periods will both ensure that the rate of progress is on track for all groups to reach the goals, as well as clearly show the progressive reduction in inequalities between social groups in achieving the targets. This approach could be extended for the monitoring of other targets, including those that may not have zero or 100 per cent targets.



Example: **UNICEF: Monitoring of Results for Equity System (MoRES)**

This is a programming and monitoring approach that was conceptualized in 2011 to strengthen UNICEF's efforts to address inequities and do more to reach the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children, and can be used to track inequities and deprivations in the Sustainable Development Goals era. The MoRES approach strengthens existing planning, programme design and monitoring practices by emphasizing:

- Improved identification and analysis of deprivations of children's rights and inequities experienced by the most disadvantaged children across the life cycle;
- Use of a common analytical framework (i.e. the "determinant framework") that can be adapted by sectors to identify, address and frequently monitor key bottlenecks and barriers that impede results for these children; and
- Use of frequent monitoring data to inform timely course corrections in plans, strategies and actions at national and subnational levels and to inform policy dialogue on specific issues. MoRES consists of four interrelated core components (levels): Equity-focused situation analysis, strategic planning and programme development (Level one); Monitoring organization-specific programme implementation (Level two); Frequent decentralized/disaggregated monitoring of bottlenecks/barriers and use of the data for action (Level three); and Monitoring final outcomes and impact (Level four).

D. Accountability for results

Accountability for results, within and beyond the United Nations system, will also be critical for reversing the trend of rising inequalities, and alerting Governments and other actors if the situation is deteriorating, with the aim of getting back on track or changing track if necessary.

The United Nations system organizations will need to be accountable for their own impacts and progress at the collective and individual entity level in contributing to the imperative of combating inequalities and discrimination, in line with the CEB's Statement of Commitment and their strategic frameworks and action plans.

At the same time, the United Nations system can support the accountability of Member States, including by supporting the establishment of Sustainable Development Goal review and follow-up mechanisms at the local, national, regional and global levels, including supporting States' reporting to the global High-level Political Forum review process. The United Nations can also use its convening power to encourage new and innovative forms of accountability.

The United Nations system also has a crucial role to play in ensuring that Sustainable Development Goal review mechanisms engage all stakeholders, particularly civil society and marginalized people who may still be being left behind, so that the voices of the people inform the process. Taking account of

existing efforts already under way in the context of the United Nations Development Group MAPS project, there should be a focus on:

1. **Ensuring that the Sustainable Development Goal review process and mechanisms at the global and national levels maintain a focus on "leaving no one behind", monitoring progress in reducing inequalities and elimination discrimination.** This should be facilitated through the United Nations system contributing data and analysis of trends on inequalities, discrimination and inequities (potentially in open access formats) and on progress achieved to Sustainable Development Goal review mechanisms. This should build on existing work with national government partners, human rights institutions, regional bodies and the United Nations human rights mechanisms, to integrate recommendations from the human rights bodies into Sustainable Development Goal reporting mechanisms.

2. **Advocating together with a common voice of the United Nations system, including through the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals Action Campaign, to highlight opportunities and challenges related to progress and gaps** on combating inequalities, discrimination and inequities, including highlighting who is being left behind and whether the furthest behind are being reached in efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda. This advocacy should focus attention on the most vulnerable and marginalized people and groups facing ongoing discrimination, exclusion and marginalization and be grounded in the human rights principles of equality and non-discrimination in line with the Charter of the United Nations.

3. **Supporting the strengthening of a participatory approach to accountability,** building on ongoing civic engagement and outreach around the Sustainable Development Goals, including through the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals Action Campaign, to convene consultations with civil society, including women's groups, minority communities, human rights defenders and other stakeholders, and institutionalizing their participation in Sustainable Development Goal review mechanisms at the national, regional and global levels. This should include encouraging efforts to build innovative and informal forms of accountability, such as social and gender auditing, user-friendly citizen scorecards, participatory budgeting and promoting the participation of rights-holders in local and national Sustainable Development Goal processes, as already initiated under the United Nations Development Group and building on the existing experiences of many entities.

4. **Making use of a diversity of accountability mechanisms,** including ensuring that information gathered in existing mechanisms feeds into Sustainable Development Goal processes (e.g., the human rights mechanisms) and building new partnerships (e.g., the ILO tripartite mechanism working with health workers) and bringing in the labour organizations where relevant. Accountability should also foster South-South, South-North and triangular cooperation and innovative dialogues among central and local level governance actors to build accountability.

At the country level, national Sustainable Development Goal review and accountability mechanisms are already being put in place in some countries, with the support of the United Nations country team in drafting of National Sustainable Development Goal Reports (with UNDP support).

Many United Nations entities have also developed new and innovative forms of accountability, that are being adopted for a participatory approach to Sustainable Development Goal accountability — see the UNICEF example outlined below. A range of other examples of innovative United Nations entity initiatives are included at **annex III**.

Efforts to coordinate United Nations advocacy and civic outreach have also been initiated through the United Nations-wide Sustainable Development Goals Action Campaign, which is working to give voice to citizens and civil society and encourage them to engage in and monitor implementation of the 2030 Agenda at the local and national levels.

The High-level Committee on Programmes should aim to reinforce these efforts, while maintaining an overview of progress and facilitating a collective review of the results being achieved by the United Nations system in meeting this imperative.

Example: **UNICEF: innovative forms of monitoring and accountability**

- **Using real time monitoring information to strengthen accountability in schools:** Working with EduTrac, which collects real-time information on school enrolment, attendance, effective delivery of textbooks and school sanitation infrastructure, UNICEF has supported the strengthening of accountability within the Ugandan education system. The system allows reporters — school principals, students, and community members — to send alerts via SMS, triggering the mobilization of resources and actions to protect children from abusive teaching practices, speed up school construction and reduce teacher absenteeism. EduTrac has already generated a dynamic dialogue between the community and the Government, increasing accountability in over 3,500 schools with the collaboration of 10,000 reporters.
- **Using social media and community radio to build accountability on adolescent issues:** UNICEF also support, media networks and community radios, e.g., in Indonesia and Nepal, provide space for young people to discuss the status of schools and social services. In countries including Jordan, adolescents' participation in local governance has influenced local government plans and helped hold local governments accountable for delivering services for children and adolescents. Youth innovation labs in Kosovo and elsewhere allow adolescents to design their own solutions for social impact. Uganda and Zambia are using U-Report to hear the voices of adolescents and use this real-time data to influence policies.
- **Leveraging the impact of national human rights institutions for child rights:** National human rights institutions or ombudspersons are important mechanisms to support accountability and implement child rights on the ground. They have an existing mandate to monitor the actions of Governments and other entities, receive complaints, provide remedies for violations, and offer a space for dialogue about children in society and between children and the State. UNICEF is working to establish or strengthen such institutions in a number of countries, e.g., in Morocco, the *Conseil National des Droits de l'Homme* is collaborating with UNICEF to create and support a training

module in the new training centre, which will enable all field-based staff to identify, report and alert others about child rights violations. In Peru, UNICEF helped build the capacity of the Ombudsman's Office to generate evidence on various issues related to child rights, and to increase the coverage of their unique protection service specializing in children's issues within the municipal sphere.

Example: **United Nations-wide support for Sustainable Development Goal implementation: MAPS**

Efforts to roll out United Nations Development Group-wide MAPS support for Sustainable Development Goal implementation include initiatives to support subnational/local Sustainable Development Goal implementation, engage and empower change agents for inclusion, including:

Sustainable Development Goal advocacy and civic engagement

- United Nations Development Group efforts, under the MAPS roll-out seek to leverage the Sustainable Development Goals to boost voice and participation of traditionally excluded and marginalized persons, groups and communities. The Goals lend legitimacy and visibility to local inclusive change agents — empowering them to be heard, inform and advance solutions and hold responsible agents to account.
- UNDP hosts the United Nations-wide Sustainable Development Goals Action Campaign, which strives to give voice to citizens and civil society and encourage them to engage in and monitor implementation of the 2030 Agenda at the local and national levels. One important aspect is the My World 2030 platform, which collects globally comparable disaggregated citizen generated data — at scale and nationally representative — and contributes to reporting back on Sustainable Development Goal progress and building dialogue between decision makers and citizens to contribute a "people's perspective" on how to implement the new agenda at different levels and monitoring of national policies and services that directly impact their lives.
- United Nations Development Group advisory and operational support seeks to build public ownership of the new agenda, including through a customizable multi-stakeholder toolkit on Sustainable Development Goal awareness and public engagement. This will include localized campaign materials; analysis of citizen perception trends; and surge support to countries undertaking common country assessments (CCA/UNDAFs) to foster direct citizen engagement. Women and youth groups and those previously excluded, such as indigenous peoples and people with disabilities, will be particularly targeted.

Local/subnational Sustainable Development Goal implementation

- Participatory, community-level tailoring makes global goals more relevant and important to people. Local Sustainable Development Goal implementation can thus improve local knowledge — through citizen tracking and big data — making it harder to "leave people behind"; strengthen intergovernmental

coordination — making it more likely resources get where they are most needed — and enable local authorities to engage and respond to marginalized and excluded groups. The United Nations is well placed to work with and empower local change makers and proposes to do so through the joint efforts of UNDP, UNCDF and others to support localizing the Goals.

- Under the United Nations Development Group strategy to implement the Sustainable Development Goals via MAPS, UNDP is undertaking joint efforts to strengthen local capacities to improve the supply, quality and availability of disaggregated data. Information from national human rights institutions and the international human rights system will inform efforts to identify those being left behind, and track and report Sustainable Development Goal progress.

VII. Next steps for implementing the Shared Framework

Unless urgent and effective action is taken to reverse the trend of rising inequalities both within and among countries, the sustainability of development, as well as economic, social and political systems across the world will be at risk, with implications for all pillars of the United Nations system's work, from development to human rights to peace and security.

This is why Member States adopted a new development agenda that puts a priority on more equitable development. It is also why the CEB recognized this imperative in its Statement of Commitment on "Putting the imperative to combat inequalities and discrimination at the forefront of United Nations efforts to support implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development".

This "Shared Framework for Action on Combating Inequalities and Discrimination" aims to ensure a strategic, whole-of-system approach to implementing this imperative that is operationally oriented and fully grounded in the United Nations normative standards, and universally applicable for all Sustainable Development Goals in all countries. It calls for concrete action to meet this imperative by:

(i) Institutionalizing United Nations internal commitment through their strategic frameworks.

(ii) Supporting a comprehensive and coherent package of United Nations policy and programme support to combat inequalities.

(iii) Adopting common tools for analysis and monitoring that systematically integrate inequalities, discrimination and equity issues.

(iv) Building accountability for results on "leaving no one behind" through Sustainable Development Goal review mechanisms and innovative participatory forms of accountability.

Thus, the next steps for implementing this shared commitment and Shared Framework for Action should include:

1. **Role of individual CEB member organizations:** CEB member organizations should put this imperative — and the core elements of this Shared Framework — at the heart of their strategic frameworks, policy guidance and plans of action, as relevant, in support of implementation of the 2030 Agenda over the next 15 years. CEB member organizations should also systematically include inequalities, discrimination and equity issues in their analysis, monitoring and accountability frameworks to ensure that United Nations efforts prioritize this imperative with a common approach to leaving no one behind.

2. **Role of the United Nations Development Group:** The United Nations Development Group should consider how to operationalize this "Shared Framework" at the country level, including by integrating its elements into the Group's policy guidance relevant to the Sustainable Development Goals and the roll-out of United Nations support under the MAPS project and other initiatives, and its support for disaggregation and the sharing of tools for the systematic analysis and monitoring of inequalities and discrimination. It should also consider how to integrate this common approach to "leaving no one behind", including by strengthening participatory monitoring and accountability at the country level.

3. **Role of the High-level Committee on Programmes:** The High-level Committee on Programmes should periodically review the strategic implementation of this "Shared Framework for Action" and the collective impact of the United Nations system at the global policy level, including by strengthening the coordination and coherence of United Nations system efforts on the basis of this framework, and by identifying any gaps in combating inequalities and discrimination in the support of the United Nations system for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This could be followed up by the existing High-level Committee Consultative Group on Inequalities, co-chaired by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and UN-Women and with the participation of interested High-level Committee member organizations. The High-level Committee may periodically transmit progress updates to the CEB, which may include recommendations for further action to be approved by the High-level Committee and endorsed by CEB, as necessary.

Annex I

Sustainable Development Goal indicators relevant to measuring and monitoring inequalities

Sustainable Development Goal indicators (E/CN.3/2016/Rev.1, Annex IV)

Introductory paragraph on disaggregation (see annex IV): The list of indicators starts with an introductory paragraph on disaggregation, which reads "Sustainable Development Goal indicators should be disaggregated, where relevant, by income, sex, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability and geographic location, or other characteristics, in accordance with the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics (General Assembly resolution 68/261)." This paragraph reflects para. 74 (e) of the 2030 Agenda and should be applied to all the Sustainable Development Goal indicators. This will need to be supplemented to ensure full disaggregation, in line with the 2030 Agenda and the grounds of discrimination prohibited in international human rights law, and will need to mitigate any possible risks by taking account of a human rights approach to data collection and disaggregation.[134]

Sustainable Development Goal Indicators (as listed in annex IV): Almost all the Sustainable Development Goal indicators will also be directly relevant to measuring inequalities, if they are consistently disaggregated. Many of the Sustainable Development Goal indicators are also directly relevant to combating discrimination and inequalities, including those below (***in an illustrative but not comprehensive list***):

Indicators on discrimination include all those in Goal 5 on gender equality and many of the indicators in Goal 10 are relevant, including, e.g.:

> 5.1.1 Whether or not legal frameworks are in place to promote, enforce and monitor equality and non-discrimination on the basis of sex
>
> 10.3.1 Proportion of the population reporting having personally felt discriminated against or harassed within the previous 12 months on the basis of a ground of discrimination prohibited under international human rights law

Indicators relevant for income and economic inequalities include, e.g.:

> 10.1.1 Growth rates of household expenditure or income per capita among the bottom 40 per cent of the population and the total population
>
> 10.2.1 Proportion of people living below 50 per cent of median income, by age, sex and persons with disabilities
>
> 10.4.1 Labour share of GDP, comprising wages and social protection transfers
>
> 5.4.1 Proportion of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work, by sex, age and location
>
> 5.a.1 (a) Proportion of total agricultural population with ownership or secure rights over agricultural land, by sex; and (b) share of women among owners or rights-bearers of agricultural land, by type of tenure

5.a.2 Proportion of countries where the legal framework (including customary law) guarantees women's equal rights to land ownership and/or control

5.c.1 Proportion of countries with systems to track and make public allocations for gender equality and women's empowerment

8.5.2 Unemployment rate, by sex, age group and persons with disabilities

8.6.1 Percentage of youth (aged 15-24) not in education, employment or training

Indicators relevant for social inequalities include, e.g.:

1.a.2 Proportion of total government spending on essential services (education, health and social protection)

1.3.1 Proportion of population covered by social protection floors/systems, by sex, distinguishing children, unemployed persons, older persons, persons with disabilities, pregnant women, newborns, work injury victims and the poor and the vulnerable

4.5.1 Parity indices (female/male, rural/urban, bottom/top wealth quintile and others such as disability status, indigenous peoples and conflict-affected, as data become available) for all education indicators on this list that can be disaggregated

Indicators relevant for political inequalities include, e.g.:

5.5.1 Proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments and local governments

5.5.2 Proportion of women in managerial positions

16.7.1 Proportions of positions (by sex, age, persons with disabilities and population groups) in public institutions (national and local legislatures, public service, and judiciary) compared to national distributions

16.7.2 Proportion of population who believe decision-making is inclusive and responsive, by sex, age, disability and population group

16.10.1 Number of verified cases of killing, kidnapping, enforced disappearance, arbitrary detention and torture of journalists, associated media personnel, trade unionists and human rights advocates in the previous 12 months

Indicators relevant for global inequalities include, e.g.:

10.6.1 Proportion of members and voting rights of developing countries in international organizations

10.a.1 Proportion of tariff lines applied to imports from least developed countries and developing countries with zero-tariff

13.b.1 Number of least developed countries and small island developing States that are receiving specialized support, and amount of support, including finance, technology and capacity-building, for mechanisms for raising capacities for effective climate change-related planning and management, including focusing on women, youth and local and marginalized communities

15.6.1 Number of countries that have adopted legislative, administrative and policy frameworks to ensure fair and equitable sharing of benefits (of genetic resources)

16.8.1 Proportion of members and voting rights of developing countries in international organizations

Annex II

Examples of United Nations programmes and activities on inequalities and discrimination

A. Legal and anti-discrimination measures, rule of law and access to justice

- **Eliminating all forms of discrimination in laws, policies and practice** is critical for reducing inequalities that result from discrimination, including on the basis of sex/gender and all other grounds of discrimination, and is a strong commitment in Sustainable Development Goals 5 and 10 of the 2030 Agenda. This requires anti-discrimination laws and affirmative action where appropriate, including to address experiences of multiple discrimination.

- For example, UN-Women focuses on promoting gender equality and eliminating gender-based discrimination, while OHCHR, as the lead agency on human rights, works on ending all forms of discrimination prohibited under the international human rights treaties, including promoting and protecting the rights of groups affected by discrimination, including those related *inter alia* to women and girls, ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, migrants, indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, older persons and children, etc., including by contributing to the increased use of international standards in national legislation and policy and in legal systems. It also supports the development and implementation of national action plans against racial discrimination and on the protection of minorities. WHO and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) have developed a joint *Zero Discrimination in Health Care* campaign which sets out seven action areas around which WHO/UNAIDS and partners should align their activities, including addressing legal and policy barriers to eliminating discrimination in health-care settings, including but not limited to, on the basis of HIV status, sexual orientation, gender identity, sex, age, mental health, disability, ethnicity, or migrant status.[135] UNDP also works with United Nations partners and civil society to support countries to review and reform laws, policies and practices impeding effective HIV responses, in line with the recommendation of the Global Commission on HIV and the Law. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) supports efforts to eliminate gender-based discrimination, particularly in criminal laws and criminal justice policies and practices. Non-discrimination is an essential principle of effective and human rights-compliant prevention of violent extremism and counter-terrorism as discriminatory practices (such as indiscriminate surveillance measures against certain religious, ethnic or political groups, or racial or religious profiling in law enforcement) may antagonize the communities on whose support Governments most need to rely in order to prevent violent extremism. DESA works to advise Governments on policies and relevant measures to advance equality and non-discrimination in line with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) assists Governments to remove inequalities in the law that limit women's access to tenure rights.[136]

Example: *UNESCO International Coalition of Inclusive and Sustainable Cities — ICCAR*

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has been advocating for city-level action in the struggle against racism and all forms of discrimination through the mobilization of the International Coalition of Inclusive and Sustainable Cities (ICCAR). Launched by UNESCO in 2004, ICCAR now has over 500 Member Cities worldwide across its seven regional and national Coalitions. ICCAR promotes international cooperation between cities to promote inclusive urban development free from all forms of discrimination, by sharing good practices, knowledge and expertise, and by advancing joint action through the development of participatory city-level policies and initiatives. In its 18 April 2016 ICCAR Global Steering Committee Declaration, the Committee renewed commitment to fostering closer interregional cooperation, global advocacy and action in the context of the Third United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Development (Habitat III). It emphasizes that "sustainable urban development cannot be achieved without addressing challenges posed by a culture of racism and discrimination". It also highlights that "translating human rights into concrete actions and mechanisms fostering gender equality is a key factor for development, democracy and inclusion."

- The Elimination of Racial Discrimination Plan (Ecuador) — developed with support from UNDP and UNESCO in 2009 as a strong example of a policy developed in a consultative way with all social groups involved and with support from presidential level.[137]

- **Promoting gender equality and eliminating all forms of violence against women and children:** Addressing gender inequalities, which remain the most pervasive form of inequality and discrimination, must be central to all efforts to reduce inequalities. This is a core focus of all United Nations entities, with UN-Women as the focal point for gender equality and women's empowerment in the United Nations system. UN-Women supports the adoption and implementation of legal frameworks to promote gender equality across a broad range of areas including anti-discrimination, equal pay for work of equal value, land and property rights, marriage and family, violence against women and political participation. Supporting implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women is a key area of UN-Women's work worldwide. UN-Women provides technical and/or financial support to countries in every region to implement the Convention. This includes support for capacity-building and training on the Convention and women's human rights for government officials, gender advocates and other stakeholders. Support is provided to States parties for reporting to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, in preparing for the constructive dialogue with the Committee, and in connection with preparation of shadow reports by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and United Nations country team reports submitted to the Committee. UN-Women supports follow-up to concluding observations of the Committee, including integration into national laws, policies and programmes. OHCHR also works

for the implementation of the Convention to strengthen gender equality, including women's rights and sexual and reproductive health and rights and combating sexual and gender-based violence.

- Other entities focus on specific aspects. For instance, the ILO has launched the Women at Work Centenary Initiatives that include major assessment of the situation of women in the world of work as a basis for renewed action and benchmarks.[138] The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and FAO focuses on rural women and developing their capacities to realize their legal rights to land; advocating for gender-sensitive inheritance and land rights laws, with FAO addressing the effects of gender inequalities in the performance of the agricultural sector and levels of food security and nutrition. FAO has also developed guidelines entitled "CEDAW — A tool for gender-sensitive agriculture and rural development policy and programme formulation", which are being applied by member countries. The World Food Programme (WFP) Gender Policy (2015-2020) presents a strategic vision to enable WFP to integrate humanitarian protection concerns and gender equality and women's empowerment into all of its work and activities. UNODC promotes effective human rights-based, crime prevention and criminal justice responses to violence against women. ILO works on legal frameworks to promote equal pay for work of equal value, while UNICEF works on legal frameworks related to eliminating harmful practices.

- **Enforcing labour rights, decent work and minimum wages, including for migrant workers and eradicating forced and child labour.** Combating inequalities also requires reversing exploitation of workers and unfair wages that are below what is necessary to achieve an adequate standard of living. ILO has a specific mandate in this regard and works to promote ratification and implementation of the ILO conventions, including the core principles of equality and non-discrimination enshrined in the ILO Constitution as well as international labour conventions, including Conventions No. 100 and 111, which are close to universal ratification. The International Programme on the Elimination of Child and Forced Labour (IPEC+) also aims to protect vulnerable children. OHCHR also works to strengthen the right to work, including for migrants, through promoting ratification and implementation of International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families. ILO and UNODC have a joint initiative on preventing and responding to abusive and fraudulent labour recruitment.[139] FAO also promotes youth employment in agriculture and supports several countries with its programme on Child labour Prevention and Elimination in Agriculture. UN-Women supports women's collective action to claim labour rights. UNDP is supporting Governments in the Latin America and Caribbean region to develop a Gender Equality Seal Certification Programme through which they can recognize private and public companies for meeting specific standards to promote gender equality and empower women in the workplace.

- **Advancing access to justice, rule of law and fundamental freedoms:** Promoting access to justice and the protection of freedoms of expression, association and peaceful assembly, in line with goal 16 on peaceful, just and

inclusive societies, is also critical as is strengthening national systems of promotion and protection of human rights. In this regard, for example, UNDP and OHCHR support National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs), as vital bridges between civil society, the general population and the State, to strengthen the oversight and accountability mechanisms, including with respect to implementing the principles of equality and non-discrimination. UNDP works to expand human rights-based rule of law and access to justice among marginalized and vulnerable populations, including through legal aid and transitional justice programmes. UNODC focuses particularly on the criminal justice framework, improving access to justice and prison reform.[140] OHCHR is working to strengthen accountability and the rule of law, including through the fair and effective administration of justice systems, upholding the rule of law based on international norms and standards.

B. Social policy measures to reduce inequality

- **Social protection systems** work to reduce inequalities by providing a safety net for those at the bottom of the ladder to ensure that they do not fall further behind and to protect a range of economic and social rights. For example, ILO focuses on social protection floors for all, which is linked to human rights and has been also supported by OHCHR.[141] UNICEF works to promote measures such as cash transfers, school fee abolition, health insurance and social support services to protect children. WFP works to ensure that the food and nutrition needs of vulnerable people are considered in social protection policies and programmes and met, including through direct support for food-based safety net programmes, and technical support for national social safety nets. ILO works to promote universal access to maternity protection, which is relevant to Sustainable Development Goals 1.3., 8, 8 and 10.[142] UNDP also assists in the implementation of social protection systems, based on a human-rights-based and inclusive approach by enabling communities to organize and articulate their needs and generate evidence of the gaps in services to break the cycle of inequality and poverty. For example, UNDP helps shape and adopt policy and institutional measures that increase women's access to social protection schemes and works with partners to help countries to implement HIV-sensitive social protection, including a focus on those left behind by the AIDS response. FAO joins efforts with partners to strengthen government capacities in designing, implementing and monitoring social protection systems that benefit rural households and those dependent on rural livelihoods, including for advancing rural women's economic empowerment to reduce gender inequalities.

- **Universal health coverage** (UHC) aims to implement laws and policies to promote universal access to health care and ensure no one faces catastrophic out-of-pocket expenditure as a result of health costs that push them into poverty. UHC is a flagship programme of WHO which promotes universal and affordable access to health care for all. The Global Strategy for Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health also has an entire pillar dedicated to rights designed to tackle issues such as early and forced child marriage, including female genital mutilation and to address other barriers to health including

through legal frameworks. As part of this initiative, WHO and OHCHR have also established a high-level working group of global champions on health and human rights of women, children and adolescents to bridge the technical — and mostly artificial — divide between public health delivery and human rights is of the utmost importance to effectively respond to the call made by the Sustainable Development Goals to leave no one behind, to address discrimination and inequality, and to ensure healthy lives for all. UNDP, UNICEF and the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA) further support countries to remove legal and human rights barriers to HIV and health services, including a focus on women and those left behind in the AIDS response. WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA and UNDP collaborate at country level to encourage universal access to health and social services for marginalized populations in cities and urban settings.

- **Universal access to education, water, sanitation, care and other basic services:** Universal access to services can also promote greater equality in outcomes, by enabling all people to access the services. For example UNICEF works to encourage universal access to affordable education, including advocating for the end of user-fees for those who cannot afford access. OHCHR works to promote legal and policy frameworks for universal access to services to ensure the realization of economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to education and the rights to water and sanitation. IFAD is working to promote sustainable and affordable sources of energy for poor rural households. UN-Women promotes access to services, including education, water, sanitation, care and health services, as an important pathway for redressing women's socioeconomic disadvantage and reducing women's burden of unpaid care work. FAO is developing methodological tools for the integration of gender-sensitive indicators on agricultural water management in FAO's global water information system (AQUASTAT). DESA focuses on e-government strategies which enhance transparency, accountable and equitable public service delivery and public participation.

- **Universal access to nutritious food:** Where food is available but inaccessible to the targeted hungry poor, WFP is already driving a scale-up of cash-based transfers. WFP cash-based transfers offer an opportunity not only to address food security and nutrition issues but also to increase inclusion of the target population in the local financial and market system. WFP is committed to providing cash-based transfers for a range of basic needs in contexts where it is appropriate in conjunction with national social protection schemes.

- **Narrowing the digital divide and access to ICT:** "Ensuring that no one is left behind" in telecommunications means *universal access and service (UAS)*. The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) focuses on the role of ICTs as a key enabler to accelerate social, economic and environmentally sustainable growth and development for everyone. According to ITU data, some 20 countries have also made broadband and/or Internet access a right — either as a basic legal right, citizen's right or constitutional right. IFAD is also focusing on extending ICT infrastructure to rural areas and training rural people in their use, e.g., using mobile phones to access market information or to send/receive remittances.

C. Macroeconomic, employment and fiscal policy measures

- **Redistributive fiscal policy and progressive taxation:** The 2030 Agenda calls for fiscal, wage and social protection policies to progressively achieve greater equality.[143] Many United Nations agencies work on these issues. DESA has shown how redistributive and pro-poor fiscal policies are critical for reducing inequalities. UNICEF's work on public finance has also been promoting more progressive fiscal policies — e.g., in Malawi, UNICEF's support for a review of education and health sector spending underpinned successful advocacy to protect social sector funding during public sector reforms of the Government, and also helped secure budget allocations for early childhood development for the first time. UN-Women works to improve public financing for gender equality, including through the adoption of gender-responsive budgets that channel adequate resources to both women and men. UNDP also works on assessments of the impact of fiscal and social policies on poverty and inequality and supports countries to advance fiscal reforms that contribute to reducing inequality. OHCHR advocates for the justiciability of economic and social rights and for the mobilization of the maximum available resources to promote the progressive realization of human rights, in line with the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, including through the promotion of a human rights approach to fiscal policy and development assistance.

- **Full employment and inclusive economic policies:** Goal 8 calls for full and productive employment. ILO is the lead agency for full employment, along with the international financial institutions. The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) is working for more inclusive industrial development to address lack of jobs, jobs that pay too little, as well as the economic empowerment of marginalized populations, in particular women, youth, ethnic minorities and migrant workers, as well as pervasive inequalities between and within populations and regions. IFAD focuses on rural development — particularly for rural women, youth and indigenous peoples — who are most likely to be left behind, including through targeted training, access to productive resources and market access initiatives. It also engages in global and national policy processes, advocating for policies sensitive to the needs and realities facing poor rural people, e.g., equitable land policies, smallholder sensitive marketing, training, research and infrastructure policies, policies eliminating gender discrimination, and policies recognizing the rights of indigenous peoples. UNDP works to remove structural barriers that poor and disadvantaged groups face in the labour market and supports enabling conducive institutional, legislative and policy frameworks. UNDP also supports inclusive and sustainable market growth by working to overcome institutional and cultural barriers preventing women from starting a business and by developing, expanding, greening and de-risking key livelihoods and job creating sectors such as agribusiness, tourism, renewable energy, retailing, mining and large capital projects.

- **Tackling illicit outflows and tax evasion** can also help to expand resources available for redistributive purposes. UNODC works on corruption, economic crimes such as fraud at customs and tax crimes, financial sector crimes,

money-laundering, and the financing of terrorism and transnational organized crime, including supporting Member States' efforts to implement the provisions of the United Nations Convention against Corruption and the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.

D. Strengthening participation and political representation

- **Protecting fundamental freedoms of expression, association, peaceful assembly, insulating democratic governance from elite political capture, and strengthening democratic political participation access to public information and for both men and women** is critical for ensuring participation and political representation, including to address political and regulatory capture that can enable policies that allow inequalities to persist. A number of agencies work on different aspect of these issues. For example, ILO works to protect freedom of association, including in relation to trades unions. OHCHR works for legal, policy, administrative and institutional reforms to guarantee the rights to freedom of opinion and expression, peaceful assembly and association and participation in public life to widen the democratic space and increase participation and representation of all people, including women and including marginalized and discriminated groups in State institutions and decision-making bodies. UN-Women works to achieve legislative and constitutional reforms to ensure women's fair and equal access to political spheres as voters, candidates, elected officials and civil service members. UNDP works to support free and fair elections and to promote women's political participation. In 2015, UNDP supported women candidates in national elections in 36 countries. DESA promotes effective, accountable, gender-responsive and transparent institutions at all levels and people's participation in the entire policy-making process (design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation). More efforts still need to be made in expanding access to other groups and partners, including more grassroots and local organizations rather than larger, international NGOs.

- **Promotion of indigenous peoples' rights:** The United Nations Development Group Guidelines on Indigenous Peoples' Issues provide guidance to United Nations country teams on how to integrate indigenous issues in their programme to support the implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).[144] Further, the system-wide action plan on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2015) ensures a coherent approach by the United Nations to achieving the ends of the Declaration. Guided by the system-wide action plan, several agencies, including DESA, OHCHR, ILO, UNDP actively promote the rights of indigenous peoples through the implementation of the Declaration and the ILO Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169), with a focus on strengthening participation and consultation with the aim of seeking free prior and informed consent in the context of development.

- UNESCO focuses on strengthening intercultural communication and cultural rights as part of the right of freedom of expression. IFAD works on tailoring development to local culture and, in particular, funding projects that strengthen the culture and identity of indigenous peoples. UNEP works to

promote access to genetic resources and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from their utilization. In addition to its targeted country programmes, UNDP promote indigenous peoples rights through its Social and Environmental Standard, which seek to ensure that projects that may impact indigenous peoples are designed in a spirit of partnership with them, with their full and effective participation, with the objective of securing their free, prior, and informed consent (where their rights, lands, resources, territories, traditional livelihoods may be affected.[145] FAO works in several Sub-Saharan African countries, to promote the Dimitra Community Listener's Clubs which promote the access to and sharing of information and knowledge among isolated and remote rural communities, to empower women and men. The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) offers training activities and information resources that aim specifically at enabling indigenous peoples to make more effective use of intellectual property principles and tools, if they so wish. For example, indigenous peoples often express the need for the protection of their traditional knowledge (TK) and traditional cultural expressions (TCEs) against misappropriation and misuse. WIPO also hosts an intergovernmental negotiation on genetic resources, TK and TCEs, and the key interest of indigenous peoples in these negotiations is recognized in the content of the negotiating texts as well as in the various modalities that facilitate their participation in the negotiations as observers.

- **Youth participation in decision-making processes:** DESA and the Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development (IANYD) work to promote young people's effective inclusive civic engagement at the local, national, regional and global levels and young people's participation in inclusive political processes.

E. Accountability of the private sector

- **Building responsible practices and accountability of the private sector** is also vital, given the increasingly powerful role of private sector entities in development. OHCHR works to promote the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, and to raise awareness regarding the standards applicable to business enterprises, as well as tools for human rights impact assessments, for the effective prevention and mitigation of any negative impact on human rights due to business activities. Together with Save the Children and the United Nations Global Compact, UNICEF developed the Children's Rights and Business Principles, released in 2012, to give businesses a clear idea of where and how their businesses might impact children.[146]

- The private sector is already taking action to advance the 2030 Agenda while creating opportunities for growth, cost reduction and improved management of risk. Innovative technologies and approaches to resilience are being developed, along with financial products, and platforms and services for the billion poorest people. WFP partners with the private sector to improve its work in areas such as the value and supply chain, fortification, specially formulated nutritious foods, financial services for the poor and food security mapping. For example, WFP uses mobile technology for real-time food security assessments and monitoring (mVAM). Through private partnerships,

WFP and stakeholders can have a positive influence on organizational practices, policies and behaviours for achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 2 on zero hunger.

F. Addressing inequalities to prevent and address environmental and humanitarian crises

- **Preventing, mitigating and building resilience to climate, natural disasters, desertification, land degradation and humanitarian crises, particularly for marginalized and excluded communities including refugees and migrants:** The joint UNDP-UNEP Poverty-Environment Initiative (PEI) is committed to advancing equality to achieve poverty-environment objectives that lie at the core of sustainable development. Healthy ecosystems and the services they provide, such as food, water, disease management, climate regulation, and spiritual fulfilment, are vital for the full enjoyment of human rights and food security. The Initiative will continue to support building accountability mechanisms that are nationally and locally appropriate, accessible, transparent and effective in strengthening overall monitoring and evaluation systems and capacities for sustainability. WFP promotes livelihoods and resilience building activities linked to food security and nutrition, climate change adaptation, risk management, and strengthened sustainability and resilience of food systems. Examples of such efforts include WFP's support for the African Union's Africa Risk Capacity (ARC) and the R4 Rural Resilience Initiative (R4) approach that helps communities be more resilient to climate variability and shocks through a combination of four risk management strategies: improved resource management through asset creation, insurance, livelihoods diversification and microcredit, and savings.

- UNEP is already making efforts to address **current patterns of production and consumption** in taking forward Goal 12 of the Sustainable Development Goals to rebalance unequal levels of consumption, ending wasteful and harmful production and consumption which are degrading the environment and exacerbating inequality at many levels. The IFAD Adaptation for Smallholder Agriculture Programme (ASAP) channels climate finance to smallholder farmers so that they can access the information tools and technologies that help build their resilience to climate change. FAO and UNDP integrate gender-responsive approaches to agriculture and water management as part of climate change adaptation and mitigation initiatives. UNDP also continued to support gender mainstreaming in sustainable forest management and through the United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries (UN-REDD). UNDP crisis response and early recovery efforts focus on restoring and improving economic opportunities, jobs, and livelihoods for the most affected populations, in particular youth and women. This is critical to prevent the further deterioration of well-being of those affected by crises, and to prevent temporary shocks from having permanent effects on the well-being of affected populations. It is also an opportunity to "build back better" and ensure that the resilience of communities is strengthened. The DESA *World Economic and Social Survey 2016*, identifies how polices to build climate resilience will need

to address root causes of poverty and vulnerability and thus provides an opportunity to reduce inequalities.[147] DESA also continues to mainstream disability in disaster risk reduction responses, policies, and programmes as well as monitoring and evaluation, building on the successful outcome at the United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030) in close collaboration with the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR) and a multi-stakeholder caucus. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs also promotes the mainstreaming of disability in all aspects of humanitarian action, building on the Sendai Framework and the outcome of the World Humanitarian Summit, including the international commitment to disability-inclusive humanitarian action: "the Charter" proposed at the World Humanitarian Summit. WHO also works on human rights and climate change with a focus on the gender dimensions and measuring inequities and impact of climate change, as does OHCHR. OHCHR is also working to include human rights standards in humanitarian response.

G. Global policy measures

- **Trade:** UNDP advocates for a fair and open multilateral trade system, promotes regional integration and the development of regional trade strategies, to enhance sustainable and equitable growth. UNDP also supports policy integration at the national level, enabling developing countries, the least developed countries in particular, to integrate pro-poor and pro-health trade policies in development strategies, and helps in the identification of trade capacity gaps and solutions to overcome these challenges. UNDP, working in close collaboration with the UNAIDS Secretariat, is supporting United Nations Secretary General's High-level Panel on Innovation and Access to Health Technologies to recommend solutions for addressing the policy incoherencies between trade rules, public health and human rights. OHCHR has worked to issue guidance on how to safeguard human rights — including the principles of equality and non-discrimination — in the context of international trade and investment agreements, including by development tools for human rights impact assessment.

- **Finance:** UNDP provides strategic assistance in catalysing investment in green technologies, for more inclusive and sustainable development and that disproportionately benefit the poorest. UNDP works with countries to develop financial solutions in sustainable management of ecosystem goods and services; improving water and oceans governance; scaling up climate change adaptation and mitigation; sustainable, affordable and clean energy; and sustainable management of chemicals and waste. To achieve this, UNDP supports national partners in planning, accessing, delivering, diversifying, scaling up and sequencing a variety of environmental vertical funds — the Global Environment Facility, Green Climate Fund, Adaptation Fund, Multilateral Fund for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol, and multi-donor trust funds managed by the United Nations system such as UN-REDD and the UNDP Thematic Trust Fund — and combining this funding with other sources of public and private financing. This financing is used to

develop capacity, remove policy and regulatory barriers and expand or transform green markets to increase resilience and reduce poverty and inequality.

- **Policy space and coherence:** There is a need to preserve national policy space for laws and policies for reducing inequalities, including in the economic and trade spheres, as well as greater coherence between international human rights law and international trade law. A number of agencies have worked on these issues, including OHCHR and UNDP and others, e.g., for the promotion of the TRIPS Agreement on Public Health that balances the protection of free trade and intellectual property rights with the imperative of public health for all. WFP facilitates nationally-led policy reviews for zero hunger to identify gaps in the national policy framework and determine priority actions in the food security and nutrition sector to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 2, in partnership with government and other institutions.

- **Migration:** UNDP supports countries to formulate and implement comprehensive national policy and institutional frameworks for migration, including strengthening government capacities to integrate migration into their development strategies and plans. UNDP works with host and return communities to address the local drivers of migration and root causes of displacement while leveraging the potential of migration for local sustainable development and managing the impacts of immigration, emigration, internal migration and displacement. OHCHR has worked to integrate a human rights-sensitive approach to international frameworks for migration, including improving recognition of the rights of migrants and their families, and to support national authorities in developing and implementing human rights-compliant migration systems. FAO works with its partners to generate evidence on international and internal migration, its root causes, and its contribution to agriculture and rural development; support institutional capacities to deal with large movements of refugees and migrants from an agriculture and rural point of view and disseminate lessons learned and best practices for scaling up innovative solutions; facilitate policy dialogue directed to improve understanding of rural migration; and strengthen partnerships and advocacy for addressing the root causes of migration and enhance its positive contribution.[148]

- **Technology transfer:** For example, the UNIDO Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) Programme promotes technological upgrading and South-South Cooperation. UNIDO's African (Accelerated) Agribusiness and Agro-industry Development Initiative (3ADI) also supports an investment programme that will significantly increase the proportion of agricultural produce in Africa that is transformed into differentiated high-value products. UNIDO promotes sustainable, inclusive business opportunities for the rural poor through agribusiness and agro-value chain development. Through its technical assistance, UNIDO links resources and markets in the agribusiness value chains and strengthens forward and backward industrial linkages in order to generate economic transformation of countries, improve employment and income opportunities, and reinforce sustainable livelihoods. Through its "No Country Left Behind" initiative, the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) aims to improve countries' air connectivity, access to the

global aviation system and to address the infrastructure and capacity gaps across States, countries and sectors. ICAO activities also promote the transfer of aviation technologies, access to equitable trade, and inclusive policies and builds resilience in States to facilitate humanitarian relief and response to crises and public health emergencies.

- **Intellectual property rights:** Over the last few years, a number of important developments have taken place in the international intellectual property system. Member States of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) on 24 June 2012, adopted the "Beijing Treaty on Audiovisual Performances" which deals with the intellectual property rights of performers in audiovisual performances and grants performers economic and moral rights for their fixed performances. The Beijing Treaty brings audiovisual performers into the fold of the international copyright framework in a comprehensive way, for the first time, and potentially enables performers to make a financial gain from their efforts. Member States of WIPO on 27 June 2013, adopted the "Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who Are Blind, Visually Impaired or Otherwise Print Disabled". The Marrakesh Treaty boosts access to books for the benefit of hundreds of millions of people who are blind, visually impaired and print-disabled and was the culmination of years of work on improving access for the blind, visually impaired, and print disabled to published works in formats such as Braille, large print text and audio books. In order to complement this effort and give effect to the Marrakesh Treaty, the WIPO Secretariat in partnership with organizations that serve people with print disabilities and organizations representing publishers and authors has developed the Accessible Books Consortium (ABC). The ABC is a multi-stakeholder partnership that aims to increase the number of books worldwide in accessible formats and to make them available to people who are blind or visually impaired.

Annex III

Tools and methodologies for equity/inequality monitoring

This list includes illustrative examples of new and innovative approaches being developed within the United Nations system to monitor inequalities, equity and discrimination:

- **WHO Health Inequalities Monitoring** and Health Data Collaborative is based on 100 core indicators and WHO Office of the Americas (PAHO) is working with Colombia University's Earth Institute to efforts to ensure the indicator framework adequately reflects gender, equity, rights and social determinants by deconstructing a core list of 100 indicators by equity gap and gradient.[149] WHO has also developed a monitoring framework with the World Bank on Universal Health Coverage that has equity stratifiers.

- **OHCHR has developed human rights indicators and a human rights-based approach to data collection and disaggregation** which can be adapted for the Sustainable Development Goals, including guiding efforts at disaggregation at the national level to ensure that these are aligned with international standards, including human rights standards, and take account of human rights risks of collecting data on marginalized groups (see box above).

- **WFP has developed a mobile-phone-based remote survey system.** The WFP Mobile Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (mVAM) collects food security data through short mobile phone surveys, using SMS, live telephone interviews and an Interactive Voice Response system to understand the food security situation of people living in places too dangerous or remote for traditional face-to-face data collection. mVAM has provided essential decision support in conflict affecting environments where face-to-face data collection is fraught with risk to staff and survey respondents. Since mVAM was piloted in 2014 in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Somalia, it has been deployed to over 20 countries, including emergencies in West Africa, Iraq, Syria, South Sudan and Yemen. mVAM uses free and open source software, and data is made available on an open access basis.

- **UNODC has worked to address the statistical challenge of the production of good quality data on small/hidden population groups**, which often remain invisible in current data production. Examples of such groups are: people who inject drugs; sex workers; victims of trafficking in persons; and victims of sexual violence. Traditional household surveys are not well equipped to produce data on such groups (as this would require increases in cost or complexity of survey design). Alternative approaches to estimate small groups include so-called Network Scale-Up methods or Respondent Driven Sampling, which represent tested methodologies that can provide high quality data in a sustainable manner.

- **ILO has also reached a new definition of "work" to include many groups which had been previously been invisible in data and statistics**. In particular, informal workers, non-paid work, volunteer work and self-production of goods and services will be specially tackled and measured by official statistics under the agreement reached by the International Conference

of Labour Statisticians at its nineteenth session in 2013. Women, who are often deeply involved in these type of activities, will now also be included in employment (if they work for pay or profit) or in unpaid activities — they will not be invisible any more. Women and men from marginalized groups affected by inequalities and discrimination, for instance indigenous peoples, ethnic minorities or caste-based groups also tend to be overrepresented in these kinds of work and this move towards better statistics is hence crucial.

- **The ILO is currently engaged in strengthening existing administrative registries used by ministries of labour or other institutions in order to transform them into valuable and internationally comparable statistical databases.** By coding textual sources from legal frameworks in law and in practice into quantitative figures, countries will be able to monitor qualitative aspects like labour rights compliance. Turning labour inspection reports into quantitative figures will allow better information on compliance of labour laws in countries and therefore target policies towards reducing occupational risks and improving work conditions at the workplace. The ILO is also deeply involved in enhancing capacities in capturing key indicators from establishment surveys as a way of combining information from the traditional household surveys. An Inter-Secretariat Expert Group on Household Surveys was created in 2015 by the United Nations Statistical Commission to work with all entities involved in collecting data from households, in order to align with the enhanced requirements from the emerging Sustainable Development Goal Indicators Framework.

- **UNDP is rolling out a poverty-risk analysis tool, piloted in Latin America**, in order to scale up support for leaving no one behind. Leaving no one behind implies understanding how and why people exit and fall back into poverty. Recent research in Latin America reveals that the household determinants of "moving out of poverty" are systematically different from determinants of "sliding back in". Policies (spanning labour markets, education, social protection, systems of care and access to financial and physical assets) should thus be designed with the specific intent of lifting and keeping people out of poverty.

Example: **UNDP tools for evidence-based policymaking on the drivers of inequality**

- **Inequality-adjusted Human Development Index (IHDI):** Combining a country's achievement in health, education and income with how those achievements are distributed, the IHDI is a tool to inform policies towards inequality reduction, and leads to better understanding of the drivers of inequalities across populations.

- **Humanity Divided: Confronting Inequalities in Developing Countries:** A report which showed how inequalities of outcome and opportunities are both important and how they interact with each other.

- **Divergence, Determinants and Impact of Income Inequality in Sub-Saharan Africa:** Ongoing comprehensive study on inequality in Sub-Saharan Africa. The study focuses on nine countries (Angola, Ghana,

Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Senegal, South Africa and Zambia) and various sectors (agriculture, manufacturing, extractive and social protection) and analyses the divergence of inequality among countries as well as the determinants and associated development impact of income inequality in the region.

- **Progress at Risk: Inequalities and Human Development in Eastern Europe, Turkey, and Central Asia:** Regional Human Development Report focused on the drivers of increasing income inequality in the region and means to address them in the context of the Agenda 2030 commitment to leave no one behind.

- **Based on the Human Development Report and in response to the dearth of data on LGBTI people, UNDP has launched an LGBTI Inclusion Index.** This global index measures the inclusion of LGBTI people across five elements of sustainable development — political and civic participation, economic well-being, education, health, personal security and violence.

- **UNDP is piloting initiatives to localize Goal 16 targets**, supporting regional and local authorities to apply their national road map for achieving inclusive and peaceful societies at the level of cities, municipalities and local communities. Pilots include innovative engagement processes at the national and local levels, involving stakeholder groups, related awareness campaigns, public administration and local government associations. Pilot countries have mainstreamed Goal 16 targets into national planning and monitoring processes, localized Goal 16 targets, and developed and adapted diagnostic tools to overcome obstacles. Policy support is provided through a "Goal 16 Solutions Portal", facilitating statistical capacities and inter-agency collaboration.

- **UNDP works with countries to adopt and use a Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI)** to better identify the overlapping deprivations people face and understand the implications for entrenched poverty and inequalities. UNDP strengthens the capacities of local actors to use the index in the design of policies and programmes. National Human Development Reports, produced over the last two decades — in most cases by national experts, with UNDP support, also include a wealth of data and analysis on inequalities.

- **UNDP also works with countries in undertaking National Human Development Reports that focus specifically on advancing local understanding and analysis of inequalities and their link to development.** This is for instance the case of the Maldives Human Development Report 2014, which presents a framework that links vulnerability and inequality to the Maldives context. Vulnerabilities are presented and assessed in terms of structural vulnerabilities that relate to the physical setting of the country and the over-reliance of the economy on tourism and imports. The report assesses also other vulnerabilities in terms of risks such as natural disaster incidents, the global financial imbalances and the recent political and social transition in the country. The report argues that these vulnerabilities have an impact on

inequality in the various human development dimensions directly, i.e. on individuals, households and communities.[150]

- **FAO, IFAD and WFP annually collaborate to produce The State of Food Insecurity in the World** (SOFI) report annually to assess progress in reducing food insecurity globally and identify groups being left behind. From 2016 onwards, a revised product is envisaged to adapt to Agenda 2030. In terms of lessons, **greater disaggregation of data** is required, clearly by **gender** — though this is already happening — and also by **rural/urban** and, where, possible, **age**. Greater understanding is needed on who and where the people at risk of being left behind are, with global trends such as urbanization creating debates around how the spatial distribution of hunger and poverty is likely to evolve in the years ahead.

- **FAO is scaling up its ongoing work on gender statistics in agriculture through the *FAO Global Strategy for Improving Agricultural and Rural Statistics*.** The ultimate goal of this work is to improve the availability of systematically integrated and comparable sex-disaggregated and gender-relevant data within large-scale agricultural surveys (or agricultural modules inserted in household surveys). FAO is presently preparing a Guideline to identify key gender-relevant indicators in agriculture and propose questions and modifications to existing agricultural and farm surveys so to better capture these indicators. The Guideline takes into consideration several aspects of women's and men's role in agriculture, such as access to (and control of) productive and non-productive assets, access to financial resources, access to trainings, groups and associations, time-use and labour, decision-making, etc. The Guideline consolidates all the gender relevant work carried out so far on best practices in the collection, generation and use of sex-disaggregated agricultural statistics. Emerging and challenging topics — such as land ownership, rural women's productive and reproductive work — will also be considered and recommendations will be provided on how to mainstream such topics in the agricultural and farm surveys.

- **FAO develops agricultural statistics, including improving the availability and use of gender statistics,** to inform policy and programme formulation in agriculture and rural development, supporting Member States to capture the social dimension in agricultural censuses, related rural surveys and food security monitoring, including relevant sex-disaggregated indicators with an agricultural/rural dimension or food security dimension. FAO guidelines for the World Programme of Agricultural Census 2020 include a focus on the intra-household distribution of ownership and managerial decisions, for sex-specific information about decision-making on agricultural holdings, as well as on women's ownership of critical assets (e.g., land and livestock). The FAO "Voices of the Hungry" project uses a novel approach to collect nationally representative food insecurity data at individual level, enabling disaggregation by sex of respondent; the re-tabulation of national household surveys, which has led to the creation of a database of key food consumption indicators disaggregated by sex of the household head (controlling for key economic and demographic variables); and supporting national capacities to integrate the Women's Dietary Diversity Score (WDDS) data into the household budget surveys.

- **In September 2016, UN-Women will launch its new Flagship Programme Initiative "Making Every Woman and Girl Count".** Through partnerships with national statistical offices in developing countries, international statistical agencies and civil society organizations, and with financial support from public and private sector partners, this Initiative aims to affect a radical shift in the production, availability, accessibility and use of quality data and statistics on key aspects of gender equality and women's empowerment. While more than a quarter of the 230 unique indicators agreed by the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goals indicators to monitor progress in achieving the Goals are explicitly related to gender equality, data are currently not available for most of these indicators. Closing these data gaps is of critical importance and will to a large extent determine whether policy efforts are marshalled and the goals and targets are achieved or missed.

Annex IV

Innovative forms of accountability useful for the Sustainable Development Goals

- **The United Nations-wide Sustainable Development Goals Action Campaign is a system-side effort to coordinate advocacy and civic outreach** through which it is working to give voice to citizens and civil society and encourage them to engage in and monitor implementation of the 2030 Agenda at the local and national levels. One important innovation is the global My World 2030 platform — which engaged more than 8 million people in the lead-up to the Sustainable Development Goals — and is now being used to keep people engaged including by collecting globally comparable disaggregated citizen generated data — at scale and nationally representative. It is envisioned that the mechanism will enable citizens to contribute to Sustainable Development Goal reports and build dialogue between parliamentarians, local governments, mayors and citizens to contribute a "people's perspective" on how to implement the new agenda at different levels and monitoring of national policies and services that directly impact their lives.

- **The United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Youth (UN Youth SWAP)** provides strategic guidance to the United Nations system as a whole in its work on youth. It was elaborated by the Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development (IANYD), the permanent co-chair of which is DESA. A Monitoring and Evaluation framework guides the online reporting from United Nations entities at global level and United Nations country teams on what United Nations entities do individually and collectively to advance youth development. Country-level, regional-level, topic-based reports can then be issued, as useful tools for government, youth organizations and partners. This accountability tool provides the United Nations with an opportunity to bolster inter-agency collaboration and guide further programming on youth issues in the context of the 2030 Agenda.

- **The United Nations Global Strategy on Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health has an Independent Accountability Panel** which will encourage an increased role for "citizen's hearings" as well as increased role for parliamentary committees, and national human rights and judicial institutions. It will also use standardized and user-friendly scorecards, updated frequently with locally-available disaggregated data providing insights into progress at the national and subnational levels. UNICEF, WHO and partners have also developed citizen-led, social accountability platforms such as "U Report", social audits and citizen report cards in addition to briefings or town hall meetings on tracking of results.

- **OHCHR, UNDP, UN-Women and a number of other agencies working as part of the United Nations Development Group Human Rights Working Group and with United Nations country teams are working to strengthen participatory mechanisms, including national human rights institutions and standing national coordination bodies, at the country level for follow-**

up on human rights recommendations of the international human rights mechanisms. These bodies can also review and ensure that national Sustainable Development Goal plans of action and progress achieved are aligned with human rights standards and respect human rights principles of participation, non-discrimination, transparency and accountability.

- **IFAD is working to ensuring participation of local actors in the follow-up and review process, with a focus on organizations representing the interests of rural people** — farmers' organizations, indigenous groups, etc. — to ensure these voices and perspectives are part of the process. The United Nations system in general must create spaces for those most at risk of being left behind and traditionally underrepresented — including smallholder farmers, rural women, rural youth, indigenous peoples — to voice their concerns and needs.

- **UNIDO is in the process of creating a monitoring and review mechanism to follow up on the implementation of the industry-related targets and goals** in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, particularly, but not only, those in Sustainable Development Goal 9, to be adopted by UNIDO member States at the end of 2016.

- **UNODC is coordinating global reporting on a number of the several difficult-to-measure Sustainable Development Goal indicators, especially those dealing with "hidden phenomena"** such as measuring illicit financial flows and those where no agreed-upon methodology exists.

- **FAO, IFAD and WFP are working on monitoring and accountability of Sustainable Development Goal 2 and related goals** on the basis of the information provided through the SOFI Reports, at the Committee on World Food Security (CFS), which is the foremost inclusive international and intergovernmental platform for all stakeholders to work together to ensure food security and nutrition for all. The Committee includes representatives of Member States, United Nations agencies and bodies, civil society and non-governmental organizations and their networks, international agricultural research systems, international and regional financial institutions and representatives of private sector associations and private philanthropic foundations.

- **FAO actively contributed to promote inter-agency convergence in key policy areas related to the decent work agenda in rural areas.** In particular, FAO has a longstanding partnership with the ILO, is an active member of the International Partnership for Cooperation on Child Labour in Agriculture (IPCCLA), and collaborates with other international organizations such as UNIDO, UNICEF, IFAD, and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) through joint programmes. In June 2014, FAO became an official member of the Global Migration Group (GMG). FAO is also an active member of the Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development (IANYD) and directly contributes to its United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Youth (UN Youth SWAP). In particular, FAO is jointly with ILO, UN-HABITAT and UNDP leading Measure 2.3: "Countries assisted in developing comprehensive and evidence-based employment and livelihoods programmes targeting disadvantaged youth". In addition, FAO is part of the Global Initiative on

Decent Jobs for Youth (DJ4Y) and its Strategy, which was launched in February 2016, under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council Youth Forum.

- **UNDP has the Gender Steering and Implementation Committee (GSIC),** chaired at the highest level in the organization, which monitors the implementation of the UNDP gender equality strategy by calling on bureau directors and chiefs of units to report on progress in mainstreaming gender and women's empowerment into their activities. GSIC also serves as a peer review group, ensuring that bureau directors systematically integrate gender equality in each area of work. The Chair annually presents key GSIC recommendations to the Executive Board.

- Early analysis of the implications of "leaving no one behind", carried out by UNDP and UNCDF suggests the need to understand the dynamic process by which people move in and out of poverty must be better understood.[151] Support is thus being organized to help countries analyse the underlying drivers of exclusion — as well as the risks that prevent people from staying out of poverty — spanning labour markets, education, social protection, systems of care and access to financial and physical assets.

- **UNDP Social and Environmental Standards.** Coming into effect on 1 January 2015, the UNDP Social and Environmental Standards (ESE) is a significant innovation — not just for UNDP but the United Nations system. UNDP was the first and only United Nations agency, fund or programme to embed a series of social and environmental indicators within its accountability structure, quality standards and assurance process. This is a practical measure that can be more widely adopted to improve the quality and consistency of related programming.

- **UN-Women has developed the United Nations System Wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (UN-SWAP),** the first unified accountability framework for gender equality, which over the past four years has led to the coalescing of over 90 per cent of all United Nations entities and is now used beyond the United Nations system. It constitutes an innovative method to better embed and mainstream gender equality into all functions of an institution in a new and different way. It has yielded consistent results in terms of an unprecedented level of uptake, systematic monitoring and uniform reporting over several years. In 2015, almost 75 per cent of United Nations entities reported having gender policies, up from 40 per cent in 2012. The implementation of the UN-SWAP has been catalysed by a network of over 300 focal points, double the strength of its 150 members in 2012, spread across the United Nations system. In a system as complex as that of the United Nations, harmonized accountability systems and sustainability of networks supporting them is unprecedented.

Annex V

United Nations Development Group guidance for resident coordinators and United Nations country teams

- Ongoing **United Nations Development Group advisory and operational support** is seeking to build public ownership of and accountability for the new agenda, including through a multi-stakeholder toolkit on Sustainable Development Goal awareness and public engagement for parliaments, local governments, media, youth groups, private sector, volunteer groups and others. It will include localized campaign materials; analysis of citizen perception trends; and urge support to countries undertaking CCA/UNDAF to foster direct citizen engagement. Women and youth groups, and those previously excluded such as indigenous peoples and people with disabilities are particularly targeted.

- The United Nations Development Group Sustainable Development Goal Working Group, drawing on the experience of the Millennium Development Goals era, during which the United Nations supported the preparation of over 500 national Millennium Development Goals is in the process of finalizing the production of a set of guidelines to assist United Nations country teams and Member States in the preparation of the **country-led national Sustainable Development Goal reports.** These national Sustainable Development Goal reports are expected to be key inputs into national and subnational Sustainable Development Goal review exercises, which, as outlined in the 2030 Agenda, provide the building blocks of the overall Sustainable Development Goal Follow Up and Review Framework. Among other things, these guidelines will put emphasis on undertaking the production of these reports in an inclusive manner that encourages active multi-stakeholder engagement, mutual accountability and policy dialogue.

- The United Nations Development Group is also in the process of **revising its 2010 UNDAF guidelines**, so as to incorporate elements from the 2030 Agenda and ensure that United Nations country teams are fit for purpose and have the programming tools required to effectively support Sustainable Development Goal achievement at the country level. These new guidelines have a strong focus on integrated programming approaches that build on risk management, data, partnerships, systems-thinking, policy coherence and cross-charter integration as key enablers. They also introduce a number of core programming principles that strongly resonate with the ambition of this shared framework of action and which United Nations country teams will be required to mainstream into all UNDAF programming: (1) Human rights, gender equality and women's empowerment; (2) "Leave no one behind" and (3) Accountability.

- The United Nations Development Group-Human Rights Working Group has developed a **Guidance Note on Human Rights for Resident Coordinators and United Nations Country Teams**, and has developed a set of policy and operational messages on integrating human rights into the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, to provide further practical support and policy coherence to

United Nations country teams in integrating human rights in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. The set of messages provide guidance on such issues as: how to align the Goals with the country's existing human rights commitments — including with regard to combating inequalities and discrimination; specifically on how to fulfil the pledge to "leave no one behind" and "reach the furthest behind first"; how to ensure active and meaningful participation; and how to build robust accountability frameworks in the implementation of the Goals. This highlights that to ensure that "no one is left behind", measures need to be taken to ensure that those not usually, heard, not organized, and not empowered to participate are included. It also emphasizes the need for recommendations by international human rights mechanisms to be included in plans to monitor, review and report on implementation of national plans to achieve the Goals.

- Additionally, it is critical that national Governments be supported in localizing the Sustainable Development Goals to context-specific problems. In order to do so, guidance needs to be provided as regards **customization of baskets of indicators** that can yield relevant and actionable results. It is imperative that this exercise be an inclusive one and that the United Nations Development Group actively ensure that sectoral leadership falls to expert offices so that the expertise of the United Nations system as a whole can be leveraged.

Notes

[1] See High-level Committee on Programmes Positioning Paper "Equality and Non-Discrimination at the Heart of Sustainable Development: Towards a United Nations System-Wide Shared Framework for Addressing Inequalities and Discrimination in Implementation of the 2030 Agenda" (4 November 2015) [hereinafter HLCP Position Paper]. The paper adopted by the HLCP and endorsed by the CEB in November 2015 "as an integral part of a human-rights based approach" to implementation of the 2030 Agenda (*Summary of Conclusions*, CEB/2015/2).

[2] This section is taken from the HLCP Positioning Paper. Only minor changes to the structure have been introduced in order to accommodate the text to the present document.

[3] Andrew Berg and Jonathan Ostry, "Inequality and Unsustainable Growth: Two sides of the same coin?" IMF Staff Discussion Note SDN/11/08 (August 2011).

[4] See for example, Kumhof M. and Ranciere R. "Inequality, Leverage and Crises," IMF Working Paper WP/10/268. See also report of the Commission of Experts of the President of the United Nations General Assembly on Reforms of the International Monetary and Financial System, Ch. 2, paras. 122-24 (21 September 2009) (describes inequality as a cause of the crisis and noting that responses to the crisis like bank bailouts may exacerbate inequality). See also Report of the Secretary-General, *The role of the United Nations in promoting a new global human order and an assessment of the implications of inequality for development*, A/67/394, paras. 13-14 (describes the financial crisis, financial globalization and deregulation as contributors to inequality and increasing inequality as a growing threat to economic stability).

[5] See Laurence Chandy et al., 2013, *The Final Countdown: Prospects for Ending Extreme Poverty by 2030*. Brookings Institute.

[6] Key issues in this regard are illustrated, e.g., in Save the Children, 2013. *Getting to Zero: how we can be the generation that ends poverty*. London.

[7] Ibid., Branko Milanovic, 2011. *The Haves and the Have-Nots*, Basic Books, New York.

[8] Henk-Jan Brinkman, Larry Attree and Sasa Hezir, 2013. *Addressing horizontal inequalities as drivers of conflict in the post-2015 development agenda*. Mimeo.

[9] Era Dabla-Norris et al., "Causes and Consequences of Income Inequality: A Global Perspective," IMF Staff Discussion Note SDN/15/13 (June 2015) [hereinafter Causes and Consequences], p. 4.

[10] See IMF, "Fiscal Policy and Income Inequality," IMF Policy Paper (January 2014); *United Nations Report on the World Social Situation 2013 — Inequality Matters*. United Nations Sales No. 13.IV.2 (2014).

[11] UNDP, *Humanity Divided: Confronting Inequality in Developing Countries* (November 2013).

[12] IMF, Causes and Consequences, pp. 20-24.

[13] See Thomas Piketty, 2013. *Capital in the Twenty-First Century*. Harvard University Press. Piketty and Suez's database also contains info for many other (developed and developing) countries. See also *United Nations Report on the World Social Situation 2013 — Inequality Matters*. United Nations Sales No. 13.IV.2.

[14] IMF, Causes and Consequences, *supra*, p. 16.

[15] Ibid., citing data from Atkinson, A.B., T. Piketty, and E. Saez, "Top Incomes in the Long Run of History," Journal of Economic Literature 49 (1): 3-71 (2011). See also Davies, Sandstrom, Shorrocks and Wolf "The World Distribution of Household Wealth," UNI-WIDER Discussion Paper 2008/03, (2008).

[16] IMF, Causes and Consequences, p. 15.

[17] See, e.g., Bank of England, "The Distributional Effects of Asset Purchases," Research Paper No. 73 (12 July 2012).

[18] See, e.g., Ortiz, I., Chai, J., and M. Cummins, "Austerity Measures Threaten Children and Poor Households: Recent Evidence in Public Expenditures from 128 Developing Countries," UNICEF Social and Economic Policy Working Paper No. 2011-09, UNICEF Department Policy and Practice — DESA: "The distributional effects of fiscal austerity," DESA Working Paper No. 129 (June 2013).

[19] UNDP, *Humanity Divided: Confronting Inequality in Developing Countries* (2014).

[20] UNESCO, *Education for All — Global Monitoring Report* (2015).

[21] Isabel Ortiz, Louise Moreira Daniels and Sólrún Engilbertsdóttir (Eds), *Child Poverty and Inequality New Perspectives*, UNICEF, 2012, pp. 15-25.

[22] For data on gender inequality and discrimination, see UN-Women, *Progress of the World's Women 2015-2016* (2016).

[23] Oelz, Martin, Olney, Shauna, and Tomei, Manuela, *Equal pay: An Introductory Guide*, ILO, 2013, ILO, *Global Wage Report 2014/15* (2015).

[24] ILO, "Social Protection for Older Workers", Social Protection Policy Paper No. 11 (2014).

[25] Claire Melamed, "Putting inequality in the post-2015 picture" Overseas Development Institute (March 2012). See also DESA, *Inequality Matters: Report on World Social Situation 2013*, ST/ESA/345, United Nations publications Sales No. 13.IV.2.

[26] ILO, *Global Wage Report 2014/15*.

[27] In recognition of the fact that indigenous and tribal peoples are likely to be discriminated against in many areas, the first general, fundamental principle of ILO Convention No. 169 on Indigenous Peoples is non-discrimination.

[28] UNDP Independent Evaluation Office, *Evaluation of UNDP contributions to poverty reduction* (2013).

[29] For an overview of the Inequality-adjusted HDI, see: http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/inequality-adjusted-human-development-index-ihdi.

[30] According to a recent paper by UNDP/UNCDF inequalities can be clustered together as follows: (a) Economic: these include inequalities in access to and ownership of assets (financial, human, natural resource and social). In addition, they comprise inequalities in employment opportunities and livelihoods. Underemployment and precarious employment constitute a serious challenge, with over a third of the least developed countries' total employed populations living in extreme poverty. (b) Social: these include inequalities in access to a range of services, such as education, health, nutrition, and housing. For example, in 2013 more than 21 million children of primary school age were not attending school in the least developed countries. The proportion of unregistered births in the least developed countries is over 60 per cent, leading to potential difficulties in accessing education and health care later on. (c) Political: these include

inequalities in the distribution of political opportunities and power among groups. They also encompass inequalities in people's capabilities to participate politically and to express their needs and concerns and have their voices heard, as well as in human rights and the rule of law. And, finally, (d) Cultural: these include disparities in the recognition and standing of different groups, languages, customs, norms, and practices. See UNDP/UNCDF paper: "Getting to the last mile in least developed countries: Why some are left behind — inequalities and social exclusion" (2016, Advanced copy) [hereinafter Getting to the last mile].

[31] See, e.g., Tapio Lappi-Seppälä, Trust, "Welfare, and Political Culture: Explaining Differences in National Penal Policies," *Crime and Justice* 37(1) (2008).

[32] The most recent United Nations High Level Panel Report on Peace Operations, as well as the Peace Building Review and Human various Rights Council reports refer to exclusion and inequalities as contributing to and aggravating crisis, fragility and conflict — noting that underlining human rights violations fuel conflicts and tensions; and during times of conflict generate displacement and migration. The entire United Nations system should — therefore — be involved in efforts to address inequalities in order to reduce the risk of conflict and humanitarian crises. This requires improving United Nations efforts to work across its development, human rights, peace and security mandate.

[33] See for instance, Harrison, A.; McLaren, J. and McMillan, M. "Recent findings on trade and inequality," *NBER Working Paper* No. 16425 (2010), for recent evidence on this. For example, the rise of the South and the growing competitiveness of emerging market economies in global manufacturing value chains, has led to the closure of manufacturing plants across North America and Europe, leading to loss of jobs and income opportunities for low-skill, blue collar workers. Daron Acemoglu at MIT estimates net job losses stemming from the rise in import competition from China at 2-2.4 million, between 1990 and 2011. On the other hand, the growing weight of emerging market economies transactions in international financial markets has boosted financial intermediation operations in global financial centres, such as London, New York and Tokyo, boosting incomes for workers in these sectors. Thus, according to McKinsey Global Institute, in 2010 emerging economies accounted for more than three quarters of the growth experienced in global stocks of loans held in the balance sheet of financial institutions, $2 trillion out of a total of 2.6 trillion, with China alone accounting for $1.2 trillion. Indeed, the rise of the South also offers new income opportunities for advanced economies and the possibility of offsetting these inequality dynamics. However, these transitions are not automatic and require of active policies in areas such as education, skills and technology capability upgrading, or industrial policy formulation.

[34] Inequalities are perpetuated by cultural norms and elites with no interest in changing the status quo, policies, governing institutions or processes. Rising inequalities, particularly in the extreme — can further skew power relations — by giving elites more to loose and poor and marginalized people with less voice, access to decision-makers, and public services.

[35] United Nations and UNDP helped enable national and global civil society and government actors to employ/implement the Millennium Development Goals in ways that called attention to inequalities and injustices — calling attention to including through the Millennium Development Goals Acceleration Framework, supporting disaggregation, empowering local actors to use the Goals to call attention to lagging targets and communities.

[36] General Assembly resolution 70/1: Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, United Nations Doc A/RES/701/ (21 October 2015), [hereinafter 2030 Agenda], para. 14.

[37] Ibid., para. 35.

[38] Ibid., para. 13.

[39] Ibid., para. 35.

[40] Ibid., para. 10.

[41] Ibid., para. 19.

[42] Ibid., para. 18.

[43] These obligations derive, *inter alia*, from the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination
[44] Transforming Our World: *The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (hereinafter «2030 Agenda»), Preamble.
[45] 2030 Agenda, para. 3 and Goal 5.
[46] Ibid., Targets 5.1 and 10.3.
[47] Ibid., Agenda, preamble, section on "People."
[48] Ibid., Agenda, para. 3.
[49] Ibid., para. 8.
[50] Ibid., para. 19.
[51] Ibid., Target 10.3.
[52] Ibid., Goal 4.
[53] Ibid., Target 4.1.
[54] Ibid., Target 4.3.
[55] Ibid., para. 25.
[56] Ibid., Target 4.5.
[57] Ibid., Target 6.1.
[58] Ibid., Target 9.1.
[59] Ibid., Targets 16.b and 5.c.
[60] Ibid., Targets 10.3.
[61] Ibid., Target 10.3.
[62] Ibid., Target 16.3.
[63] Ibid., Targets 10.2 and 5.5.
[64] Ibid., para. 26.
[65] Ibid., Target 11.2.
[66] Ibid., Target 11.7.
[67] Ibid., Target 11.2.
[68] Ibid., Target 15.6.
[69] Ibid., para. 4.
[70] Ibid., para. 23.
[71] Ibid., para. 35.
[72] Ibid., para. 8.
[73] Ibid., para. 29.
[74] Ibid., Preamble.
[75] Ibid., para. 20.
[76] Ibid., Targets 5.1 and 5.2.
[77] 2030, Agenda, target 5.3.
[78] Ibid., Target 5.c.
[79] Ibid., Target 4.5.
[80] Ibid., Target 4.7.
[81] Ibid., Target 5.5.
[82] Ibid., Target 5.6.
[83] Ibid., Target 8.5.
[84] Ibid., Targets 5.a and 5.4.
[85] Ibid., para. 27.
[86] Ibid., Targets1.1-1.b.
[87] Ibid., Target 1.4.
[88] Ibid., Target 10.1.
[89] Ibid., Target 10.4.
[90] Ibid., Target 10.5.
[91] Ibid., preamble, section on «Planet».
[92] Ibid., para. 18.

[93] Ibid., para. 3.
[94] Ibid., para. 16.
[95] Ibid., para. 4.
[96] Ibid., para. 68.
[97] Ibid., Target 17.10.
[98] Ibid., Target 16.8.
[99] Ibid., Target 10.a.
[100] Ibid., Target 3.b.
[101] Ibid., Target 10.b.
[102] Ibid., Target 10.6.
[103] Ibid., para. 48.
[104] Ibid., para. 48.
[105] Ibid., para. 74(e).
[106] Ibid., para. 74(g).
[107] Although the text of the Outcome Document references national statistical offices, it is worthwhile to note that there are also important statistical offices in many ministries that should be targeted for capacity-building to be able to collect, analyse and report on disaggregated data. For example, major data related to health comes from health information system within Ministries of Health.
[108] 2030 Agenda, para. 76.
[109] 2030 Agenda, Target 17.18.
[110] For the core human rights treaties, see http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CoreInstruments.aspx.
[111] See for example, Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, General Comment No. 20 "Non-discrimination in economic, social and cultural rights (art. 2, para. 2, of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights)," E/C.12/GC/20 (2 July 2009); Human Rights Committee, General Comment No. 18: "Non Discrimination," HRI/GEN/1/Rev.9 (Vol. I) (10 November 1989).
[112] 2030 Agenda, para. 88.
[113] Income inequality, as well as inequalities in consumption, wealth and other indicators of economic welfare are often used to measure disparities in "outcomes". Some of the outcome inequalities observed may be explained by differences in personal effort and ability, but a significant proportion stems from inequalities in circumstances or, more broadly, in opportunities. Differences in access to education — and in the quality of education received — or to health and other basic services, for instance, influence access to employment and income and therefore affect the opportunities people have in life. Opportunities are also influenced by other circumstances that are out of an individual's control — namely the socioeconomic situation of the person's family, the place where the person was born and attributes such as race, ethnicity, gender or having a disability. See UNDP/UNCDF paper "Getting to the last mile in least developed countries. Why some are left behind — inequalities and social exclusion" (2016, Advance copy), Box 2.2. See also United Nations-DESA, *Inequality Matters. Report of the World Social Situation 2013*. ST/ESA/345; Andrew McKay, "Defining and Measuring Inequality," Overseas Development Institute, Inequality Briefing Paper No 1 (March 2002), p. 2.
[114] For a collection of Regional and National Human Development Reports see: http://hdr.undp.org/en/country-reports.
[115] Cobham and Sumner, "Putting the Gini back in the Bottle? The 'Palma' as a policy-relevant measure of inequality", (March 2013), available at http://www.socialprotectionet.org/sites/default/files/cobham-sumner-15march2013.pdf.
[116] It is important to underline further that the international human rights framework takes account of the availability of resources and the different levels of development of Member States, since the realization of economic, social and cultural rights is subject to "progressive realization" in accordance with the "maximum of available resources". However, the obligations of non-discrimination and the duty to give priority to achieving "minimum essential levels" of the realization of each right are not subject to resource limitations.

[117] Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, General Recommendation No. 25 on article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, on temporary special measures, para. 8.

[118] All the agreed Sustainable Development Goal indicators are listed in: United Nations, *Report of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goals Indicators*, E/CN.3/2016/2/Rev.1 (29 February 2016).

[119] This is the case, for instance, of the: ILO, OHCHR, UN-Women, and UNDP.

[120] For example, ILO's Strategic Framework for 2018-2021, will be aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals and all ten of its proposed outcomes for the 2018-2019 biennium will target the inclusion and protection of vulnerable groups in the promotion of sustainable economic growth and decent work. UNICEF will continue its pursuit of equity-centred programming and policy work as part of Sustainable Development Goal implementation and its new Strategic Plan for 2018-2021. OHCHR is already mandated directly to promote and protect human rights, including combating discrimination and inequalities, and as recently reoriented its existing strategic plan to take account of the Goals, including by focusing on equality and non-discrimination to support Member States' implementation of the human rights-based 2030 Agenda and the Goals. The FAO new Strategic Framework will also prioritize contributing to reversing inequalities by helping to eliminate hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition. UNDP's Strategic Plan 2014-2017 overarching objective is to "help countries achieve the simultaneous eradication of poverty and significant reduction of inequalities and exclusion". Human-rights and gender equality are both outcomes and engagement principles. To align its geographically and thematically diverse efforts to deliver this objective, UNDP embedded Social and Environmental Standards (SES) within strengthened quality assurance, accountability and performance management systems. The SES require UNDP programmes and projects to substantiate (and learn from) theories of change that illustrate how its actions can/will significantly reduce poverty, inequalities and exclusion. They also incentivize staff to focus projects on vulnerable and excluded populations. The SES include specific programme guidance for standards related to Indigenous Peoples and Human Rights Based Approaches, further strengthening equality, non-discrimination and accountability focus of country programming.

[121] See for example OHCHR "A Human Rights-Based Approach to Data: Leaving No One Behind in the 2030 Development Agenda — Guidance Note to Data Collection and Disaggregation" (2016) available at: http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/HRIndicators/GuidanceNoteonApproachtoData.pdf.

[122] Such analysis can increasingly be undertaken in the context of ongoing United Nations Development Group support to national stakeholders to construct Sustainable Development Goal baselines; disaggregate data; set national targets; tailor national indicators; strengthen national statistical offices; explore and strengthen possible sources of data and accountability frameworks to hold responsible agents to account. Learning and exchange across the United Nations system, including via existing United Nations Development Group mechanisms — are vital to build on what works and avoid what does not.

[123] In particular, national authorities could publish the appropriate tabulations with the necessary disaggregation, or provide access to public microdata for custom tabulation and secondary analysis.

[124] See, e.g., UNDP/UNCDF, *Getting to the last mile*, *supra*.

[125] See for example United Nations DESA/DSPD technical paper on "Inequalities and persons with disabilities".

[126] See United Nations-DESA, "Sex Differentials in Childhood Mortality," ST/ESA/SER.A/314 (2011); "The Association between Two Measures of Inequality in Human Development: Income and Life Expectancy," Technical paper No. 2013/7 (2013); "The Impact of Socio-Economic Inequalities on Early Childhood Survival: Results from the Demographic and Health Surveys," Technical paper No. 2015/1 (2015).

[127] According to the Secretary-General's report on strengthening the demographic evidence for sustainable development "[m]onitoring the Sustainable Development Goals will require population data disaggregated by age and sex, race or ethnicity, migratory status, disability,

income and geographic location. The three demographic data systems that cover the whole population — censuses, population registers and civil registration and vital statistics — can produce the required level of disaggregation provided they gather the relevant information, geo-reference the data at the smallest administrative level or higher spatial resolutions and provide access to microdata for the full population so that information for particular groups can be extracted" (*Report of the Secretary-General on strengthening the demographic evidence base for the post-2015 development agenda*, E/CN.9/2016/3, para. 72).

[128] The focus on specific subgroups is the only reasonable way to get cost-effective measurement with all the relevant additional variables required to study determinants, and address policy issues require to design and to conduct specialized surveys on these topics (e.g., post-censal in-depth inquiry collecting causes of death using verbal autopsies or social autopsies to understand in order to address why children and women died and what interventions could be implemented to prevent such deaths in the future).

[129] OHCHR is engaged in working in this area, see e.g., http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/HRIndicators/StatisticsAndHumanRights.pdf.

[130] WHO introduced the methodology to measure inequality over time through measuring how faster/slower the situation is improving in the disadvantaged than the advantaged in the WHO, State of inequality: reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health (2015). Several examples and graphs are presented to show simultaneously the improvement in the national average and within-country inequality (e.g., fig 4.5) and the methodology is explained in the annex. See also WHO, Handbook on health inequality monitoring with a special focus on low and middle-income countries, 2013; Hosseipoor, A, Bergen N and Magar V, "Monitoring inequality: an emerging priority for health post-2015," 93 *Bulletin World Health Organization* (2015); Hosseinpoor AR, Bergen N, Schlotheuber A. "Promoting health equity: WHO health inequality monitoring at global and national levels". 8 *Glob Health Action 2015* 29034.

[131] Hosseinpoor et al., "Equity-oriented monitoring in the context of universal health coverage" PLoS Med, 2014, 11(9).

[132] See e.g., UNICEF, *Monitoring Results for Equity System: Evaluation Report* (2014). The Monitoring Results for Equity System (MoRES) is a programming and monitoring approach that was developed in 2011 as part of the UNICEF refocus on equity. It builds on the existing human rights based approach to programming and helps sharpen the focus of programmes on the most critical bottlenecks and barriers that are preventing children, especially the most disadvantaged ones, from benefitting from basic social services, interventions, and care practices. It includes analysis of determinants or essential conditions required to achieve results for children, and it addresses the critical gap between routine monitoring of inputs/outputs and the monitoring of high level outcomes every three to five years for improved management of results. In particular, MoRES aims to ensure that a) plans, policies and budgets are equity-focused and address bottlenecks that are impeding results for the most disadvantaged children; b) reductions in bottlenecks (and thus effectiveness of services/interventions) are identified and periodically monitored to inform adjustments to plans and policies; c) the impact of reductions in bottlenecks on addressing child deprivations and improving child well-being is assessed. Thus, MoRES is not only about monitoring, but about good programming. The MoRES approach is applicable to all country contexts, including low income/high burden service-oriented settings and middle income countries, where cooperation is focused on policy advocacy, and in both development and humanitarian contexts.

[133] See JMP et al. "Ending Inequalities," available at http://www.wssinfo.org/fileadmin/user_upload/resources/Ending-Inequalities-EN-LowRes.pdf.

[134] OHCHR A Human Rights Approach to Data. Leaving No One Behind in the 2030 Agenda: Guidance Note to Data Collection and Disaggregation at http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/HRIndicators/GuidanceNoteonApproachtoData.pdf.

[135] See Clarke, D., Rajana, D. and Schmets, G., "Creating a supportive legal environment for universal health coverage".
94 *Bulletin World Health Organization* 483 (2016).

[136] One of the main achievements in this regard is the development and official endorsement of the "Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests" (VGGTS) by FAO and its partners, which were endorsed by the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) in May 2012. The VGGTs have been adopted by 190 countries. To assist governments in applying the principles of gender equality to the governance of land resources, the technical guide "Governing Land for Women and Men" was produced by FAO in 2013.

[137] *Plan Nacional para Eliminar la Discriminación Racial y la Exclusión Étnica y Cultural 2009-2012*, SPO/EC/2009/SS/RP/PI/3 (Septiembre 2009), available at http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001879/187968s.pdf.

[138] See e.g., ILO, *Women at Work Trends Report 2016* (2016).

[139] ILO/UNODC, "Preventing and responding to abusive and fraudulent labour recruitment: A call for action" (2015), available at http://www.unodc.org/documents/human-trafficking/2015/Call_for_action.pdf.

[140] Together with UNODC, UNDP has supported the most comprehensive global study on legal aid to be published in 2016 and that will serve as an important baseline for national policy and future programming for United Nations support to Member States on access to justice.

[141] See OHCHR report on the linkages at http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/SocialSecurity/ReportSocialProtectionFloors.pdf.

[142] See http://www.ilo.org/global/topics/equality-and-discrimination/maternity-protection/lang--en/index.htm. See also http://www.social-protection.org/gimi/gess/RessourcePDF.action?ressource.ressourceId=53806.

[143] 2030 Agenda, Target 10.4.

[144] United Nations Development Group, *Guidelines on Indigenous Peoples' Issues* (2008).

[145] UNDP, *Social and Environmental Standards* (2014) (approved by the UNDP Organizational Performance Group in June 2014).

[146] UNICEF, The Global Compact and Save the Children, *Children's Rights and Business Principles* (2012).

[147] United Nations-DESA, *World Economic and Social Survey 2016: Building Resilience to Climate Change: An Opportunity for Reducing Inequalities* (forthcoming).

[148] See, e.g., FAO, *Migration, Agriculture and Rural Development: Addressing the root causes of migration and harnessing its potential for development* (2016) at http://www.fao.org/3/a-i6064e.pdf; FAO, *Migration and protracted crisis: Addressing the root causes and building resilient agricultural livelihoods* (2016), at http://www.fao.org/3/a-i6101e.pdf; FAO, Project Overview: "Youth mobility, food security and rural poverty reduction (RYM)" (2016) at http://www.fao.org/3/a-i6099e.pdf.

[149] See http://www.who.int/gho/publications/world_health_statistics/2016/en/.

[150] UNDP, *Maldives Human Development Report 2014 Bridging the Divide: Addressing Vulnerability, Reducing Inequality* (2014).

[151] UNDP/UNCDF, "Getting to the last mile," *supra*.